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WIN AN MP3 PLAYER
We've got 15 up for grabs

SURFING STARS

Big names who love the Net – and we know where they go

INTERNET CONSPIRACIES
From Di to JFK

LIZ HURLEY
WHY SHE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT GOING ONLINE

LIZ HURLEY p28
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Flick before you click

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Art Editor Paul Yelland
Deputy Editor Sue Weekes
Deputy Art Editor Tatiana Okorie
Staff Writer Robert Jeffery
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Staff Writer Ben Oliver
Sub-Editors Terry Bentley, Sarah Wakely, Claire McHattie
Picture Research Mark Ranaldi
Contributors Steve Shipside, Cliff Joseph, Chris Hadley, Rian Hughes, Steve Orino, Nick Wright, Marshall Julius, Jon Casimir, John Mullen, Hugo Dixon, Phil Madge, Ann Oliver, Jim Davies, Shaun Marin, Ian Wrigley, Victoria Williams
Without whom... Neil Sansom, Richard Woodworth, Steph Allister, Digital Outlook, Firefly, CDP
Webmaster Stewart Dean
Web Site Designers Nancy Serna-Mamini, Bronwen da Costa Freeman
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Group Ad Manager Chloe McDowell
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How to contact us
the net, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE, United Kingdom
Email ***enquiries@thenetmag.co.uk***
Telephone 020 8943 5000 **Editorial** 020 8943 5980
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: ANDRE RAU/H&K/KATZ PICTURES

'There's agitation at MP3 – the cash cow is showing signs of BSE'

OK, so I'm old. Old enough to remember queuing outside a Virgin Megastore for that precious, narcotic delivery of the Pistols' first album, and decrepit enough to have seen the Clash at the Lyceum five times. Praise the Lord and pass the Zimmer frame.

So you'll excuse me if I'm a tad overexcited by MP3, that clever little program that enables you to snatch music files from the Net and play them through your PC or an MP3 player (see page 60).

It's giddily easy: you grab an MP3 player from a site, find a file to listen to, then put the two together. Falling off a log is harder, and less rewarding.

Can I understand the music biz moguls' agitation at MP3? Of course – their cash cow is showing signs of BSE. Pirate sites proffering 'illegal' tracks abound. As soon as one site is squashed, 300 more spring up. How will a Ferrari-driving A&R boss make a living if Joe P can get it for free?

But maybe they're missing the point. Pardon my safety pins, but isn't the main benefit of MP3 going to be a sniff of hope for bands who otherwise stood no earthly chance of a record deal? Witness the genius of the newly launched ***peoplesound.com*** – unknowns can submit their latest thrashings, and put them up for the world to hear.

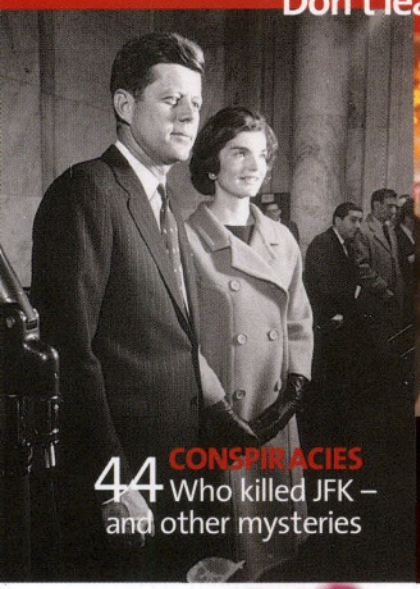
Somewhere in LA, Mr John Lydon will be sporting a wry smile.

Mark Payton

Mark Payton, **Group Editor**
mark.payton@haynet.com

thenetcontents

Don't leave your home page without us



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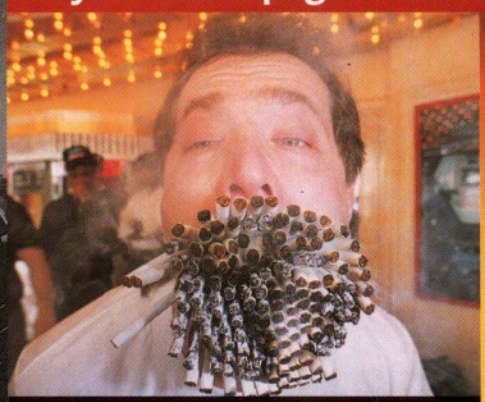

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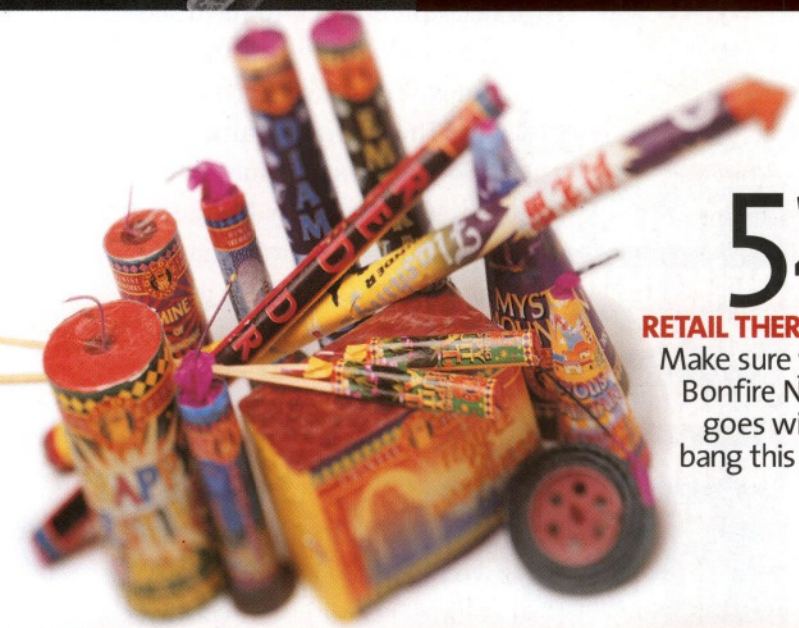

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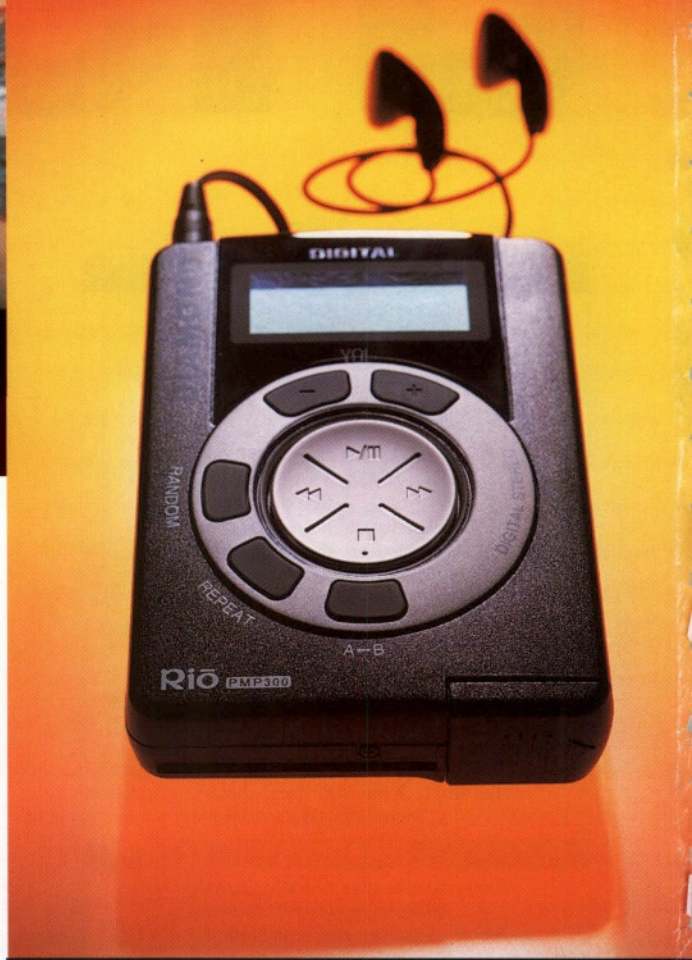

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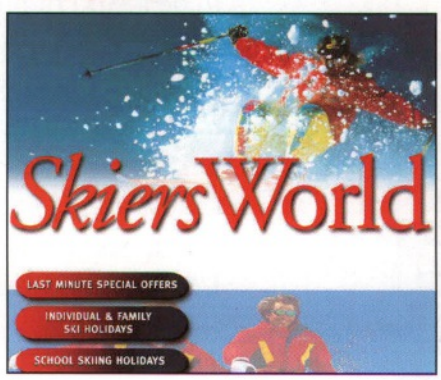

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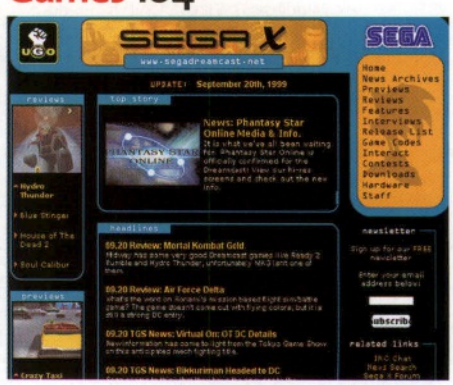

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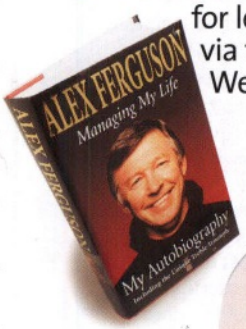

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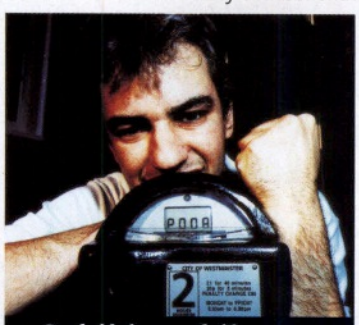

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The new-look Thunderbirds are go...

All debts are off...

NET AID The world's biggest rock stars in the world's biggest concert

The online music extravaganza, NetAid, gained momentum this month – thanks to an ingenious ruse from George Michael. The former Wham! frontman, who hit the headlines following a lavatorial run-in with the local constabulary in LA, agreed to dish the dirt on his recent ordeals in return for newspaper coverage of the charity.

Subsequent column inches boosted NetAid's profile in the wake of a lavish launch. On October 9, the best names in rock, including Michael, staged concerts in London, Geneva and America to raise money for refugees in Kosovo and Sudan. If you're reading this after NetAid, don't worry – the live concert streams are archived at ***www.netaid.org***.

Music legends and world leaders have all expressed their support for the charity. Press conferences in New York and London launched the project, with Bono, Wyclef Jean and David Bowie attending in New York, and George Michael making an appearance in London. Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, Nelson Mandela and Kofi Annan expressed their support for NetAid, and were the first to log on to the site.

Bono made a passionate plea for people to help abolish the debt of poor countries, and to continue the work started by LiveAid in 1985. 'I was so proud,' he said. 'As musicians...we could do what politicians couldn't...$200 million! Then I learnt that Africa spends $200m every week servicing its debt to the West.' He is trying to persuade leaders of rich western countries to drop the debts of poor third world nations.

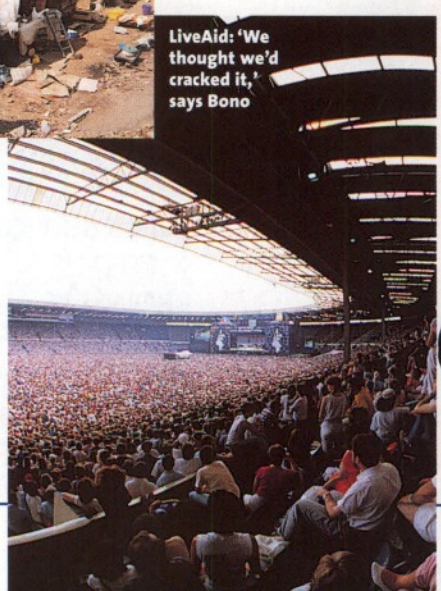
Bono has collaborated with Wyclef Jean of the Fugees to produce the official NetAid song. *New Day* will be released on 11 October – and you can see a video excerpt on our Web site at ***www.thenetmag.co.uk***.

George Michael has said he would be performing *Spinning the Wheel*, *Fast Love* and *Freedom 90*. He went on to say that he hoped his performance will influence people and inspire them to get involved in the charity.

Refugees, yesterday

POVERTY FACTS

- 1.3 billion people live on less than $1 a day
- **12 million children die annually from preventable diseases**
- 880 million people live beyond the reach of health services


LiveAid: 'We thought we'd cracked it,' says Bono

THEY SAID...

BILL CLINTON
I commend all of the sponsors of NetAid for their generosity and vision.

NELSON MANDELA
Initiatives like NetAid can help build a better world.

TONY BLAIR
NetAid brings together a group of truly talented performers with cutting edge technology.

GEORGE MICHAEL
As the Internet grows Net Aid could be a force for change.

WYCLEF JEAN
NetAid is to poverty what music is to the soul. They inspire and bring hope.

The verdict's in

FULL WEMBLEY LINE UP

David Bowie, Bush, The Corrs, Eurythmics George Michael, Stereophonics, Robbie Williams, Catatonia. Watch it at ***www.netaid.org***

KNOWHOW

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT...?

No.4: Sega Dreamcast

What is it then?
It's the newest games console on the market. It also represents what could be the final attempt for Sega to muscle its way back into the console market. Remember how popular the Megadrive and Sonic the Hedgehog used to be? Since then Sega has been eclipsed by Sony's Playstation and Nintendo's N64. This is its reply.

Is it better than the PS and N64?
Sega claim that it's the fastest games console around. What's more it is the first to come with its own Internet connection so you can play games against other Dreamcast owners around the world.

Does it use CDs or cartridges? CDs

How much will it set me back? And is it worth it?
It will cost the princely sum of £200. Whether it's worth it is up to you, but you can get a Playstation or N64 for about £80 now.

What are the games like?
We've only played a few of the demos so it's hard to tell. The making of most consoles are the classic games that come out to go with it. A blockbuster game to play on Dreamcast would make a big difference to its appeal.

Can I buy one now, and should I?
Sega has had to put the launch date for the Dreamcast back to 14 October because of problems with the Internet connection. You're bound to enjoy it if you do buy it (there's the return of Sonic for those of you who missed him). But remember, next year Sony will release the Playstation 2 which will play DVDs and also allow users to play their existing Playstation games.

www.dreamcast-europe.com

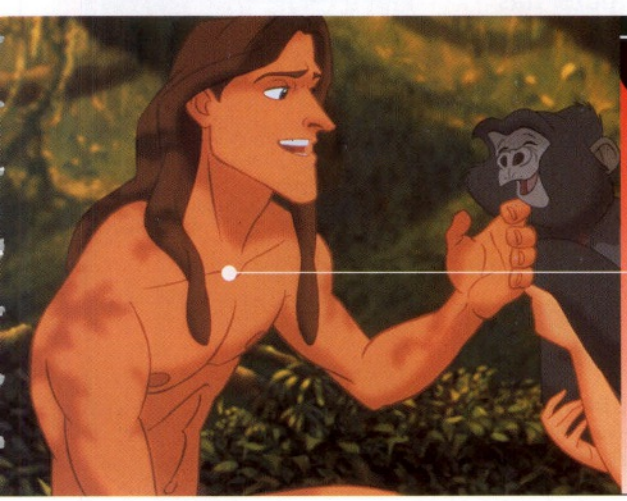
Console yourself...

THE WEB VS SEX

BOY MEETS WORLD

Sega Dreamcast may have taken console gaming onto the Internet, but Nintendo is planning to take handheld gaming online. The venerable Gameboy, having previously resorted to coming out in different colours as a marketing gimmick (it worked for the iMac, so why not?), is to boast an Internet connection.

The next generation of Gameboys will connect to mobile phones and digital cameras so players can play against each other online, download games from the Net, use email and even see the person they are playing against. You'll probably have to wait till Christmas next year before managing to get your hands on them in this country, though, so don't hold your breath. ***www.nintendo.com***



WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT ON THE NET

IN & OUT

FIREWORKS
www.merlin-fireworks.co.uk

CHARITY CONCERTS
www.netaid.org

SWINGING FROM VINES
disney.go.com/worldsofdisney/Tarzan/

MADNESS
www.madness.co.uk

SPYING
www.mi5.gov.uk

GUY FAWKES
web.idirect.com/~redsonja/guy/

MICHAEL PORTILLO
www.avert.org/ygmt.htm

REUNITING RICHARD GERE AND JULIA ROBERTS
www.runawaybride.com

LEAVES ON THE TRACK
www.railtrack.co.uk

IBIZA
members.xoom.com/Ibiza/

News Bytes

BITS IN BRIEF

BEANIE MEANIE

A conman who allegedly offered collectable Beanie Babies for sale on auction sites never delivered the toys and allegedly posted messages to victims saying, 'Ha, ha, ha, Never see the person, never meet the person, never speak with the person and then get upset when you get ripped off. You must be a bunch of morons'. The joke was on him, though, when he was arrested.

CYBERSPACE ODDITY

Music legend David Bowie has released his latest album online. Users can buy the album in Liquid Audio and Microsoft Windows Media format. Bowie was one of the first artists to release a single online and also has his own ISP.
www.davidbowie.com

SAFE CYBERSEX

In addition to protecting your online privacy, it also seems like you've got to take precautions about cybersex.

Seven consecutive cases of syphilis reported to the San Francisco Department of Health were of visitors to the same AOL chat room for gay men.

N-N-N-N-NINETEEN

Research shows a Web site can be reached from any other with an average of 19 steps. Despite increasing sites, the figure is unlikely to change much as sites tend to link to hub sites within a particular category.
www.nature.com

COMPETITION WINNERS

The winners of all our competitions from issues one and two are published on our Web site at ***www.thenetmag.co.uk.***

PICTURES: KOBAL, RETNA, REX

Things just keep on shrinking

TECHNOLOGY

On the cards

A new format for recordings that's ultra-compact

Be prepared to throw away your CDs and get rid of your vinyl – SanDisk, Panasonic and Toshiba have collaborated to create a new memory card about the size of a stamp, which is capable of storing a whole hour of MP3 music. What's more, the card is copyright-secure, so content providers – such as the major record labels – should feel that little bit safer about making MP content available for download.

The first generation of the new cards will be capable of storing 64Mb, although by 2001 it is expected that the capacity will be increased to 256Mb, which equals about four hours' worth of music. The cards are designed primarily for use with MP3 players but the originators anticipate that mobile phones, PDAs and eventually even wrist watches will be capable of playing music from them in the future. It is also hoped that as compression technologies improve and memory increases, the cards may be used for storing full-length movies.

www.sandisk.com

DOWNLOADS

Something fishy?

Cindy Margolis is the most downloadable woman on the Web, according to the Millennium Edition of Guinness World Records. It's estimated that images of her have been downloaded seven million times since she first appeared on the Net in 1985.

But Margolis is less popular than a goldfish called MOPy. The cyberpet that sulks, gets ill and yes, may even die on you has been downloaded 10 million times since it was launched in 1997.

www.cindymargolis.com www.virtualcreatures.com

So which would you rather look at?

TECHNOLOGY

Cross my Palm

The leading pocket computer has a new rival – from its own creators

The people who originally brought the PalmPilot to the world have launched a faster and cheaper competitor to the popular PDA.

The Visor handheld computer has been released by Handspring, a company formed by two of the founders of the Palm range. Visor comes in three models priced from $149 to $249 and will run the Palm operating system.

The big selling point of the Visor is its expandability. Small modules snap into the back, giving the potential to use it with peripherals such as MP3 players, mobile phones and game cartridges. ***www.handspring.com***

Why the Visor? It's expandable

SPOKEN WORD

LOOK WHO'S TALKING...

Top quotes from celebrity Net chats

'I think you can have an aesthetically beautiful girl but inside she thinks she's a real pig.'

CAPRICE ON ***www.beeb.com***

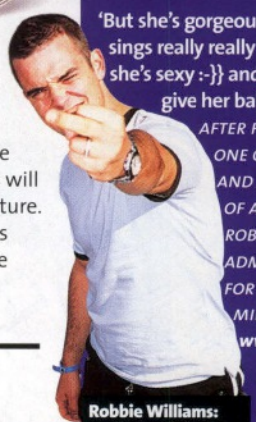
Alas, poor Caprice – what a porker!

'What is disappointing is that you have to put out a CD2 to make up your sales. On this single we didn't put out a CD2 so we didn't do as well. Maybe next time we'll play the game, but it's stupid that that's the way you have success.'

DAMON FROM OCEAN COLOUR SCENE – NOT BITTER AT ONLY GETTING TO NUMBER 13 IN THE CHARTS AT ***www.beeb.com.***

'But she's gorgeous and she sings really really well...and she's sexy :-}} and I want to give her baba...'

AFTER FLINGS WITH ONE OF THE CORRS AND A MEMBER OF ALL SAINTS, ROBBIE WILLIAMS ADMITS HIS LOVE FOR KYLIE MINOGUE AT ***www.msn.co.uk.***



Robbie Williams: spoilt for choice?

'It's still very poppy and fun but we're a bit better at singing now after our world tour.'

MEL C TRIES TO MAKE US BELIEVE THE SPICE GIRLS CAN NOW HOLD A NOTE AT ***c3.vmg.co.uk/spicegirls.***

'Plenty of bribes in the right places...'

PAUL FROM GOMEZ EXPLAINS HOW TO GET A RECORD DEAL AT ***the-raft.com.***

Sporty, was it that off-key?

TECHNOLOGY

Free shares for readers of *the net*

Fancy owning shares in your Internet service provider? Totalise is offering shares in the company to new subscribers – and readers of *the net* qualify for extras.

Anyone registering with Totalise receives 50 shares. Then, by using the service for an average of 100 minutes a month over the first three months, users can qualify for 200 more shares. As a reader of *the net* you can get an extra 100 shares simply by putting the words '*the net*' in the registration form where it asks who recommended you to the service. You can trade these shares at once and as we went to press 350 of them would be worth nearly £100. *www.totalise.net*

Celebrity bookmarks

No4 Zoe Ball

Watch out for off-the-Ball incidents

Manchester United

www.manutd.com

In a recent interview Zoe claimed she had been a United fan since she was 12, yet a few years ago she declared that she actually supported Liverpool as a youngster and switched allegiance when she was 22. She'd better catch up on the missing years.

Fatboy Slim in the House of Love

www.caroline.com/astralwerks/fbs/

What a wonderful pair they make...Zoe gets up early in the morning to play middle-of-the-road stuff and supposedly makes it easier for the nation's male contingent to get through the morning. Mr Slim (not his real name) stays up to the early hours giving it large at nightclubs, thereby making sure we feel like shit in the morning. Nice.

Radio 1

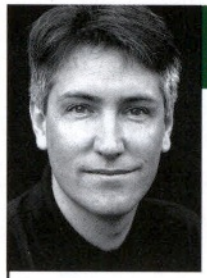
www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/

Bearing in mind that she's decided to leave the station in April to take a career break (wouldn't it be nice if we could all do that?) Ms Ball will obviously want to stay in touch with all her old cronies. What better place than the revamped Radio 1 Web site?

Natural Family Planning Service

www.FertilityUK.org

According to the Beeb, Zoe has talked about having a family in the future. What wonderful role models the baby Fatboy will have: a dad who works in clubs where everyone's high as a kite and a mum who turns up to her own wedding with a bottle of JD in her hand.



JOHN CASIMIR

WORLD SURFING CHAMPION

If there's anybody there, it's OK – we're not busy

Albert Einstein is often quoted as reckoning that human beings use only 10 percent of their mental potential. Had he lived to hear the work of Steps, he would no doubt have revised his estimate downwards.

As it happens, we're not making great use of our computers, either. They're usually switched on and doing nothing, or engaged in tasks (word processing, for example) so embarrassingly easy that they're probably glad other computers can't see them.

The people at Search For Extraterrestrial Intelligence ('Hello-oo? Anyone there?... Damn, they're always engaged!') are attempting to do something about this wastage: to harness the spare computer power of the world in their never-ending hunt for little green men. Volunteers download a small program (from ***setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu***) and a 300k chunk of unprocessed radiotelescope data. The program works like a screensaver, kicking in whenever your machine idles, analysing the data. Each block can take up to 30 hours to process.

When your CPU has finished, the results are automatically sent to the SETI database at the University of California, which then dispatches another chunk for inspection. SETI@home started in 1997 but public recruitment began only this year. On 14 August it passed the million user mark, when Englishman Ed Bradburn signed up after seeing the movie *Contact*.

'May as well mail them a door key and let 'em drink your beer...'

Think about it. That's a million computers SETI didn't have to fund, which have helped it rack up the equivalent of 50,000 years of computer processing time. They're laughing all the way to the databank. Not only are we providing our hardware gratis, we're also footing the electricity bill. May as well mail them a door key and let 'em drop round and drink your beer as well...

Many probably would. Truth is, for a generation of *ET* and *Star Wars* geeks, there's inescapable allure in the 'small but captivating possibility that your computer will detect the faint murmur of a civilisation beyond Earth', as the site puts it. Your odds of doing the horizontal folk dance with Catherine Zeta-Jones look sweet next to the chances here. If, by outrageous fluke, your computer does get a hit, you'll get the credit – which sounds ace until you realise that you'll be forever linked to the hostile aliens who colonise Earth and turn us into trough feed for their four-headed weirdo livestock.

Your name will be the last thing on the lips of several billion people as they watch their inner organs being liquefied by death rays. You'll be popular, all right. Steps might even record a song about you. Knowing your luck, those alien bastards will let them live.

On the internet in seconds.

Find your book in seconds.

Order your book in seconds.

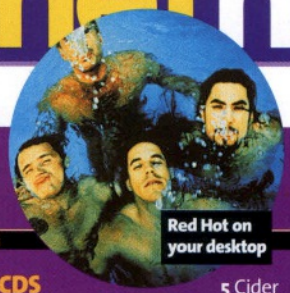
Go back for seconds.

amazon.co.uk

books for everyone

Amazon.co.uk is the exciting new way to shop for books on the internet. It's fast, convenient, secure and easy too. You can find the book you want in seconds from a selection of over 1.5 million titles and with up to 50% savings. We can even gift-wrap. Our online store is open 24 hours a day throughout the year, so you can shop when it suits you.

www.amazon.co.uk


Red Hot on your desktop

Net Charts 5
THE WEB'S FAVOURITES

ONLINE SHOPS
1 Amazon
2 AudioStreet
3 AlphabetStreet
4 iMVS
5 QXL
No surprises here. As UK online shopping continues to increase, it's bookshops and music stores that most people go for. Amazon gets one third of all shopping searches.
www.ShopMate.co.uk

Boys on top as you listen while you type

CDS ON COMPUTERS
1 Backstreet Boys
Millennium
2 Shania Twain
Come On Over
3 Limp Bizkit
Significant Other
4 Korn
Follow The Leader
5 Red Hot Chili Peppers
Californication
www.cddb.com

AUTHORS
1 JK Rowling
2 Stephen King
3 Iain Banks
4 Patricia Cornwell
5 Danielle Steele
www.searchuk.com

BOOZE LOOK-UPS
1 Wine
2 Beaujolais
3 Champagne
4 Malt whisky
5 Cider
www.searchuk.com

MOST-WANTED CRIMINALS
1 Nicolae Ion
Murder
2 Steve Martin Wolosky
Conspiracy to import, possess and distribute marijuana
3 Antonio Angles Martins
Abduction, rape, murder, illegal burial and illegal possession of weapons
4 Bassam Al-Taher
Aiding and abetting criminal damage, explosives violations, criminal conspiracy and violation of firearms laws
5 Dieuseul Jean
Murder
www. interpol.com

SITE WATCH

NEW AND APPROVED

A quick round-up of the best new sites on the Web

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?
www.phone-a-friend.com
Chris Tarrant may well be the most sadistic quiz host of all time but it hasn't stopped this being one of the most popular quiz shows since the tragic demise of *3-2-1*. The site has behind the scenes info and, while shows are airing you can take part in a Fantasy WWTBAM game and try to predict how much contestants are going to win.

THE WORLD AT WAR
www.theworldatwar.com
Another site supporting top TV programming, this excellent resource includes audio and video of significant figures in military history reminiscing about the parts they played in important events. It's fine back-up for the classic TV documentary series.

VAVO.COM
www.vavo.com
Vavo.com is a new online community zone for the over-45s. Its aim is to provide an arena for more mature Internet users to discuss issues affecting their generation. It also offers content on health, travel, finance, community, games, pressure groups and shopping.

SHOP MATE
www.ShopMate.co.uk
An easier way to locate online shops, Shop Mate lists 10 of the best sources in each of its selected categories. UK shoppers rate the outlets and you can add your own input to the information database. The site also offers competitions, tells you about special deals and has a search engine to help you find specific shops.

AC MILAN
www.acmilan.com
The Italian soccer giants hit the Net with a stylish site offering everything a fan might need. Keep up with San Siro happenings, read the history of the club and interviews with the players, take an interactive tour of the stadium and get hopelessly addicted to the Teamtiles game.

CAR ADVICE
www.caradvice.co.uk
This is an independent service giving advice on how to get the best deal when buying a car. The interface is a bit complicated but it's OK to use once you're used to it. Worth a look for any consumer or business car buyer.

THE WORLD AT WAR
Welcome to the World at War website. Based around features from the classic TV series about the Second World War, the site also contains world-class textual content from the Penguin Group.
ABOUT FEATURES VIDEOS BOOKS FORUM LINKS
PEARSON
PEARSON
PENGUIN
BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC
The German U-Boat offensive against Allied shipping in the Atlantic was perhaps their best chance to win the war. Click Here to enter the feature, and witness exclusive video interviews with key figures like Admiral Dönitz and Otto Kretschmer.
WELCOME

VOYEURISM

WEBCAMS OF THE MONTH

LOBSTER CAM
www.midcoast.com/lobcam/
So you think that lobsters have a dull life? How wrong can you be? There's all that sharpening of your claws to worry about, especially if you're going to get caught on camera. The Lobster Cam is set up underneath a lobster net and updated every two minutes.

Crustaceans and a bunch of bums: watch out for crabs

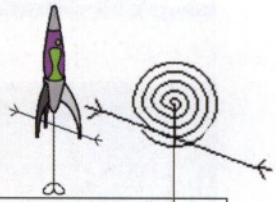
SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT TOILETCAM
www.fortunecity.com/victorian/orwell/93/toiletcam.html
Is this in danger of going round the bend? Only after you've hit 'refresh' to get the latest snap will you realise how low your life has sunk. Still, we have no shame, although there were no movements during our visit.

ARE YOU STILL USING AN ISP THAT GIVES YOU NOTHING IN RETURN?

See page 83

THE BEST, THE WORST AND THE WEIRDEST STUFF ON THE WEB

HEROES & ZEROS



Come out, you little sod – we've got a nice sauce waiting for you

STRANGEST RECIPES

EAT UP YOUR GREENS

Don't you think it's unfair how in sci-fi movies the aliens usually have so much fun feasting on humans? If it's not *Aliens* eating Sigourney Weaver's mates it's huge bugs on far-off planets mashing their mandibles on *Starship Troopers*. Now the Science Fiction Cookbook shows how to get your own back on those mean monsters that have made humans a habit. Recipes such as Chicken Fried Godzilla Lips and Tribble Delight head the menu.

www.geocities.com/Area51/Dimension/3161/SFC.html

MOST POINTLESS WEB SITE

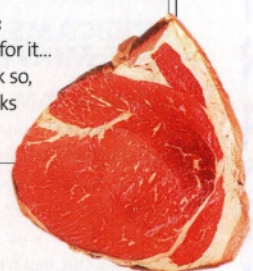
MR SWIRLY HEAD

The premise here is that you put bizarre heads on stick men and... that's it. Some of the contributions show real wit (take a look at Mr Stop Messing Around On The Internet And Get On With Your Work Else You're Sacked Head). There's a community of over 160 heads here – why not add your own? It's lunacy like this that makes the Web what it is.

www.mrswirlyhead.free-online.co.uk

Corniest joke by email

A guy walks into a bar and notices two pieces of meat on the ceiling.
The barman says:
'Do you want to take part in our competition?'
The guy asks:
'What's it all about?'
The barman tells him:
'All you have to do is get those pieces of meat off the ceiling and you get a free pint. But if you fail you have to buy everyone in the pub a drink.'
The guy replies:
wait for it, wait for it...
'No, I don't think so, mate – the steaks are too high'



STRANGEST WELCOME TO A WEBSITE

WILL THE REAL BILL STAND UP?

If you had visited Microsoft's online tech support pages recently you might have got a bit of a surprise. The headline 'Do you think you've found a bug in Microsoft Bill Gates Anus 2000?' welcomed visitors to one page. Sadly it wasn't there for long but it made us chuckle, all the same. ***www.microsoft.com***

Nothing but a low-down bum

Oh, no! So now I have to get spam as well?

WEIRDEST IDEA

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE ONLINE KIND...

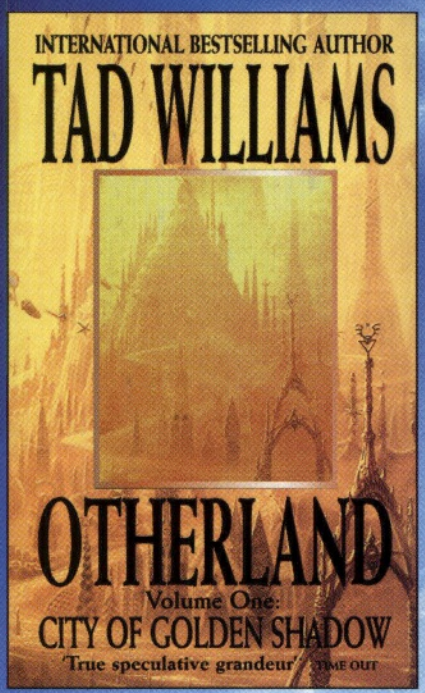
Is email with Earthlings getting dull? Fancy a conversation with someone more, shall we say, outlandish? If you've got money to burn, for $10 Bentspace will send your emails into space in the hope that they arrive at the inbox of aliens. 'Naturally, we can't promise that this mail will reach anyone or anything,' said company president Greg Snow. We wonder how they can even prove that they've sent your message. ***www.bentspace.com***

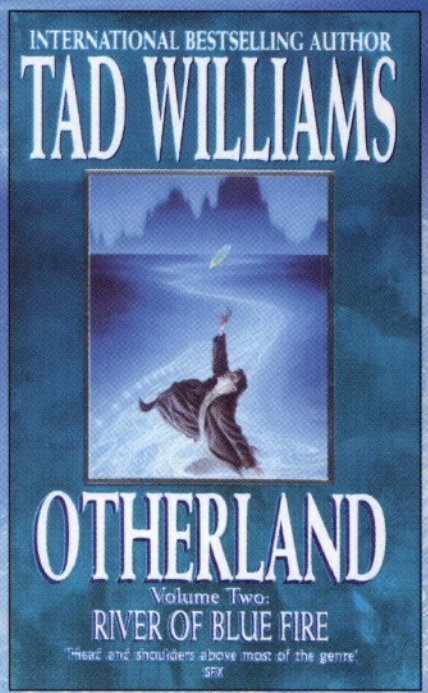
STILL USING AN ISP THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING BUT HEADACHES?

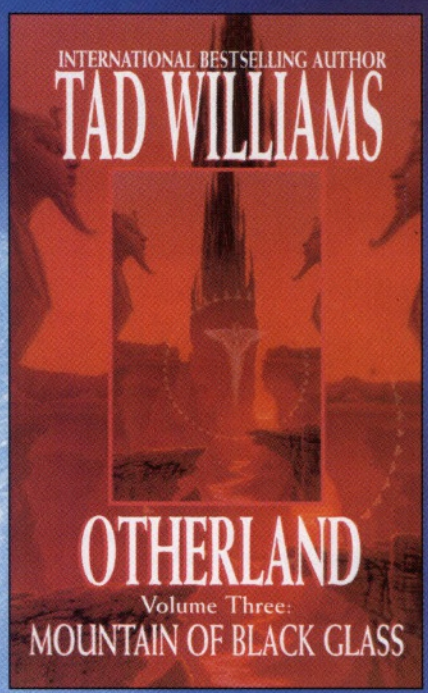
See page 83

YOUR WORLD IS ABOUT TO CHANGE

OTHERLAND







TAD WILLIAMS

ALL THREE AVAILABLE NOW

ORBIT

www.orbitbooks.co.uk

dayslikethese

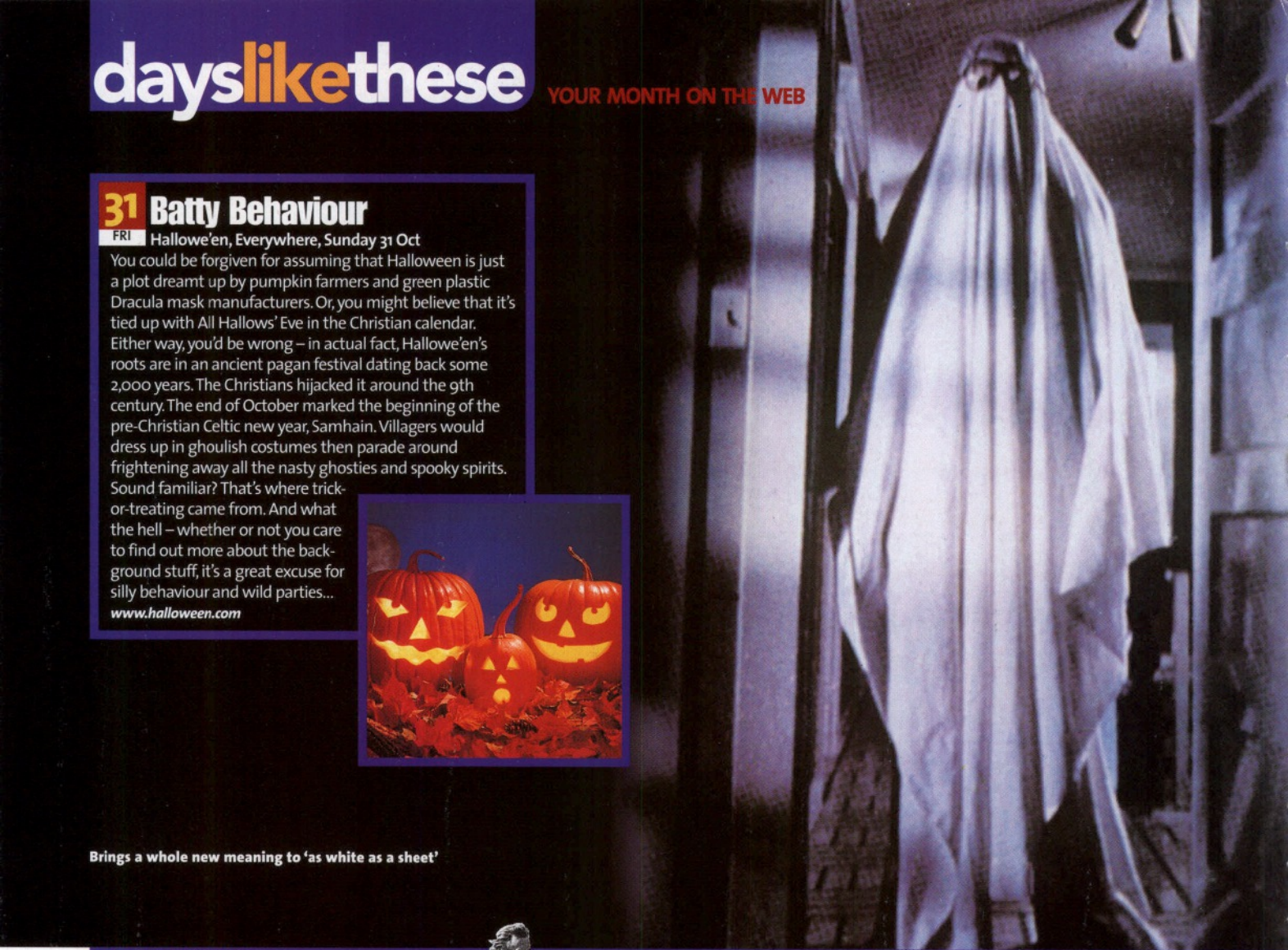
YOUR MONTH ON THE WEB

31 FRI Batty Behaviour

Hallowe'en, Everywhere, Sunday 31 Oct

You could be forgiven for assuming that Halloween is just a plot dreamt up by pumpkin farmers and green plastic Dracula mask manufacturers. Or, you might believe that it's tied up with All Hallows' Eve in the Christian calendar. Either way, you'd be wrong – in actual fact, Hallowe'en's roots are in an ancient pagan festival dating back some 2,000 years. The Christians hijacked it around the 9th century. The end of October marked the beginning of the pre-Christian Celtic new year, Samhain. Villagers would dress up in ghoulish costumes then parade around frightening away all the nasty ghosties and spooky spirits. Sound familiar? That's where trick-or-treating came from. And what the hell – whether or not you care to find out more about the background stuff, it's a great excuse for silly behaviour and wild parties...

www.halloween.com



Brings a whole new meaning to 'as white as a sheet'

DEAR DIARY

OCT 6 MONDAY — *The Jazz Singer*, the first movie with a soundtrack, premiered in 1927 ***shell2.qpt.com/www.filmsite.org/jazz.html***

Birthday: Elisabeth Shue, 36 ***www.elisabeth-shue.com***

7 TUES — National Poetry Day ***www.bbc.co.uk/education/poetry/***

Birthday: David Duchovny, 39 ***duchovny.arteonline.net/default.asp***

8 — *The Blair Witch Project* premieres in London ***www.blairwitch.com***

Birthday: Matt Damon, 29 ***members.aol.com/FilmCritic/md.html***

9 THURS — Rugby League Grand Final, Old Trafford ***www.rwc99.com***

John Lennon born 1940 ***www.merseyworld.com/imagine/index.htm***

10 FRI — *Tarzan*, Disney's latest offering, is released in the UK ***www.disney.com***

Birthday: Murray Walker, 76 ***atomicnet.com.au/murray/Homepage.html***

16 THURS — World Food Day ***www.un.org***

A hurricane ripped through England in 1987, after failing to be predicted by weathermen ***www.meto.gov.uk***

Birthday: Gary and Martin Kemp, 40 ***www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Palladium/7994/***

17 FRI — Britain's first nuclear power station opened in 1956 ***www.cannon.net/~gonyeau/nuclear/contents.htm***

Birthday: **Evel Knieval**, 61 ***www.evel.com***

18 FRI — The first-ever **cocktail** was ordered in 1776, in NY ***www.ozemail.com.au/~berghous/drink.html***

Birthday: Wynton Marsalis, 38 ***www.wilma.com/spotlight/1997/february/wynton_marsalis/***

19 SUN — Stockmarkets around the world crashed in 1987 on Black Monday ***www.ncs.pvt.k12.va.us/ryerbury/pasc/pasc.htm***

Birthday: Evander Holyfield, 37 ***www.angelfire.com/or/holyfield/***

20 MON — The Sunday Times was launched in 1822 ***www.the-times.co.uk***

Birthday: Susan Tully, 32 ***www.xcelco.on.ca/~walford/other/michelle.htm***

Maradona keeps the hand of God to himself

The Football Association was formed in 1865 ***www.football365.co.uk/***

Birthday: **Bob Hoskins**, 57 ***pages.hotbot.com/fan/clerkky/***

27 MON — Bryan Adams' *Everything I Do...* left the number one slot after a record-breaking 16 weeks, in 1991 ***www.Bryanadams.com/***

Birthday: John Cleese, 60 ***www.oberlin.edu/~ipritcha/bio.html***

28 TUES — Christopher Columbus discovered **Cuba** in 1492 ***www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/8533/columbus.html***

Birthday: Bill Gates, 44 ***www.msn.com***

29 WED — Cassius Clay won his first professional fight in 1960 ***www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Slope/3301/ali/***

Birthday: Winona Ryder, 28 ***www.for-love-of-noni.com***

Closing night of *Miss Saigon* at the Theatre Royal ***www.miss-saigon.com***

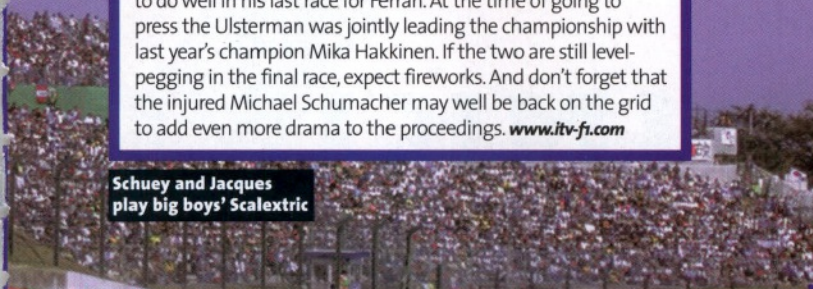
Birthday: **Diego Maradona**, 39 ***www.geocities.com/Colosseum/1862/maradona.html***

October-November

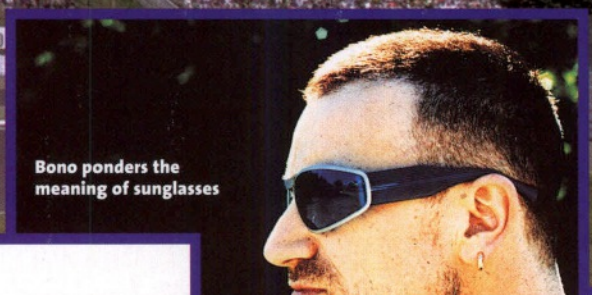
31 F1 frenzy

SUN **Formula One Grand Prix, Suzuka, Japan Sunday Oct 31**

Each time the Formula One World Championship has gone right to the wire it's resulted in a fantastic race. Given the way that this season has progressed so far, the last Grand Prix of the millennium might well be yet another. Whatever, it's sure to be a great contest at the fast Japanese circuit, with Irvine wanting to do well in his last race for Ferrari. At the time of going to press the Ulsterman was jointly leading the championship with last year's champion Mika Hakkinen. If the two are still level-pegging in the final race, expect fireworks. And don't forget that the injured Michael Schumacher may well be back on the grid to add even more drama to the proceedings. ***www.itv-f1.com***



Schuey and Jacques play big boys' Scalextric



Bono ponders the meaning of sunglasses

24 Seeing Stars

FRI **Net Aid, Wembley, Geneva and New Jersey Saturday Oct 9**

Multiply Live Aid by three, add a hefty dose of Net coverage, and arrive at the world's biggest music event, NetAid – so far, David Bowie, Bono, George Michael and Robbie Williams have all confirmed.

The whopping NetAid site has been designed to withstand one million hits per minute, and 125,000 simultaneous live streams. The concerts are merely the first part of a long term initiative to raise money and awareness in the battle against poverty around the world. ***www.netaid.org***

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY; PICTURES: REX, RETNA.

11 SAT The Mary Rose was raised from the bed of the Solent in 1982 ***www.maryrose.org***

Birthday: Bobby Charlton, 62 ***www.bciss.com/index2.html***

12 SUN First Morris Minor rolled off the production line in 1948 ***www.minor mania.com/***

Birthday: Luciano Pavarotti, 64 ***www.pavarotti inconcert.com***

13 MON The first Merseyside football derby took place in 1894 ***easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~efc/derby.htm***

Birthday: Paul Simon, 58 ***www.wbr.com/paulsimon/***

Bing Crosby died while playing golf in 1977 ***www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/3754/bing.html***

Birthday: Sir Cliff Richard, 59 ***www.stamet.com.xau/sheppard/2cliff.html***

15 WED Dutch temptress Mata Hari was executed in 1917 ***www.hersalon.com/shrine/spys/mata/mata.htm***

Birthday Sarah Ferguson, 40 ***community-1.webtv.net/puttputt32/Sarah/***

21 TUES Admiral Nelson died at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 ***victorian.fortunecity.com/lion/480/victory/index.html***

Birthday: Carrie Fisher, 43 ***www.carriefisher.com***

22 WED

The British Broadcasting Corporation was launched, in 1922 ***www.bbc.co.uk***

Birthday: **Jeff Goldblum**, 47 ***www.sonix.demon.co.uk/JeffG/***

23 THU Birthday: Anita Roddick, 57 ***www.bodyshop.co.uk***

Birthday: **Pele**, 59 ***www.pele.net***

Edson Arantes do Nasci Mento, actually

24 FRI Martin Luther King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 ***www.mccsc.edu/%7Ebhsntech/index.html***

Birthday: Kevin Kline, 52 ***people.delphi.com/dramafan/kevinkline.html***

25 SAT Booker Prize for Fiction is awarded ***ncc1701.apana.org.au/~larikin/lit/prizes/booker.html***

Birthday: **Nick Hancock**, 37 ***www.talkback.co.uk/they think/index.html***

It's not all over yet, Nick

31 SAT The radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds* caused nationwide panic in 1938 ***www.war-of-the-worlds.org***

Birthday: Tom O'Connor, 59 ***www.mainline-computers.co.uk/tomoconnor/***

NOV 1 FRIDAY Pompeii was buried by mount Vesuvius in AD79 ***www.volcanoes.com***

Birthday: Jenny McCarthy, 27 ***dspace.dial.pipex.com/jennyweb/index.shtml***

3 SUN Channel 4 went on the air for the first time, in 1982 ***www.channel4.com***

Birthday: Stefanie Powers, 57 ***www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Academy/7443/index.html***

4 THURS London Film Festival begins ***www.lff.org.uk***

Bill Clinton was elected US president in 1992 ***www.whitehouse.gov***

Birthday: **Adam Ant**, 45 ***www.adam-ant.net***

Adam did wonders for sales of Dulux

5 MON Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up the houses of parliament in 1605 ***www.innotts.co.uk/~asperges/fawkes***

Birthday: Daniella Westbrook, 26 ***www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders/home.shtml***

FREE THINKING
AT FREEUK, WE BELIEVE THE INTERNET SHOULD BE FREE.
WE DON'T BELIEVE IN SUBSCRIPTION CHARGES.
WE DON'T BELIEVE IN MONTHLY FEES.
WE DON'T BELIEVE IN SET-UP FEES.
FREE INTERNET ACCESS.
FREE UNLIMITED EMAIL ADDRESSES.
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Send your letters to:
Inbox, *the net*, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW12 0JE
or email us at ***inbox@thenetmag.co.uk***

'So no chance of a second date, then?'

Dear thenet,

I've been using the Internet for several years now and have noticed a disturbing trend. I first went online when I was 15; I frequented the chat rooms and got to know several people who have become good friends and whom I have met in RL (Real Life). However, the advent of free ISPs has come with a price: while the majority of those who have joined the Net community are polite and good-natured, there is an increasing number of rude people.

I am going to generalise: 14- to 20-year-old males, who have free Internet accounts just like me. These people do not realise there is someone on the other side of the screen. I have often been chatting with someone when someone else enters the chat room and starts using abusive language. Please remember there is a human on the other end, and – if they're going to insult someone – make sure they get the spelling right.

Krispian Lowe
Madsquirrel@klowe.freeserve.co.uk

Dear thenet,

While reading your auctions feature in October, I was surprised that you did not mention Auction Hunter. I visit this site regularly and find the supporting magazine, noticeboard and competitions excellent as well as easy to navigate. It also trades in pounds sterling, which I think is a distinct advantage.

Claire
Carmstrong@catlover.com
Consider it mentioned.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear thenet,

Thanks for your excellent article on being the perfect partner (*Then And Now*, October issue). I enjoyed the tips on how to improve your relationship by buying gifts and booking holidays via the Net. However, you failed to address one important point: what if your relationship needs pepping up because one partner spends all their time online? Using the Net even more would hardly help. My wife's at the end of her tether – and the arrival of your magazine has only added to my marital difficulties. Thanks.

John Martin
Johnmartin2000@hotmail.com
Ever tried the Relate Web site?

MAIL MONKEY It's a knockout...

From: mailmonkey@chimp.co.uk
Sent: Tuesday, 28 September, 1999
To: tony@blair.gov.uk
Subject: Cash for questions

Dear Tone,

How's it going? I haven't seen you since Monkhouse's housewarming. Glad to hear Cherie decided not to press charges. I managed to catch your latest party political broadcast the other day; must say, though, I wasn't particularly impressed. I found it a bit dark, to be honest, and I'm not sure where witches came into it. Most of the audience seemed to be screaming, which I'm sure wasn't the idea at all. Never mind.

I'm glad you received my generous 'donation' to party funds, though I'm disappointed that my proposal for the abolition of Carol Vorderman has yet to reach the statute books. Of course, I'm not suggesting that cash should influence policy, but if you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours (an idea that led me into considerable trouble when I was helping out on the set of *Edward Scissorhands*). Thought I'd drop you a line after hearing your comments on needing help to use the Internet. You claimed your kids knew more about this online business than your good self. I know exactly what you mean – I have the same problem with the little chimps. My solution? Chop their hands off. They won't be so clever with the keyboard after that.

www.aegean.net

www.blairwitch.com

www.number-10.gov.uk

www.whatnext.co.uk/carol

I was heartened, too, to hear one of your colleagues' recent comments about so-called 'travellers'. You won't believe the hassle I've had off the lot camped in my lower field. I've tried to extend the paw of friendship, letting them carry out the odd job to earn their keep, but they just go on about giving them their kids back. Some people don't know the meaning of the word gratitude.

Still, must dash; I've got a writ to serve on behalf of monkeys everywhere. If some rozzer can claim $7 million damages from George Michael for 'stress and humiliation', I'll be looking for double that for the spanking he handed out to that unfortunate primate in an LA public convenience.

Keep up the good work,

Mail monkey

Dear thenet,

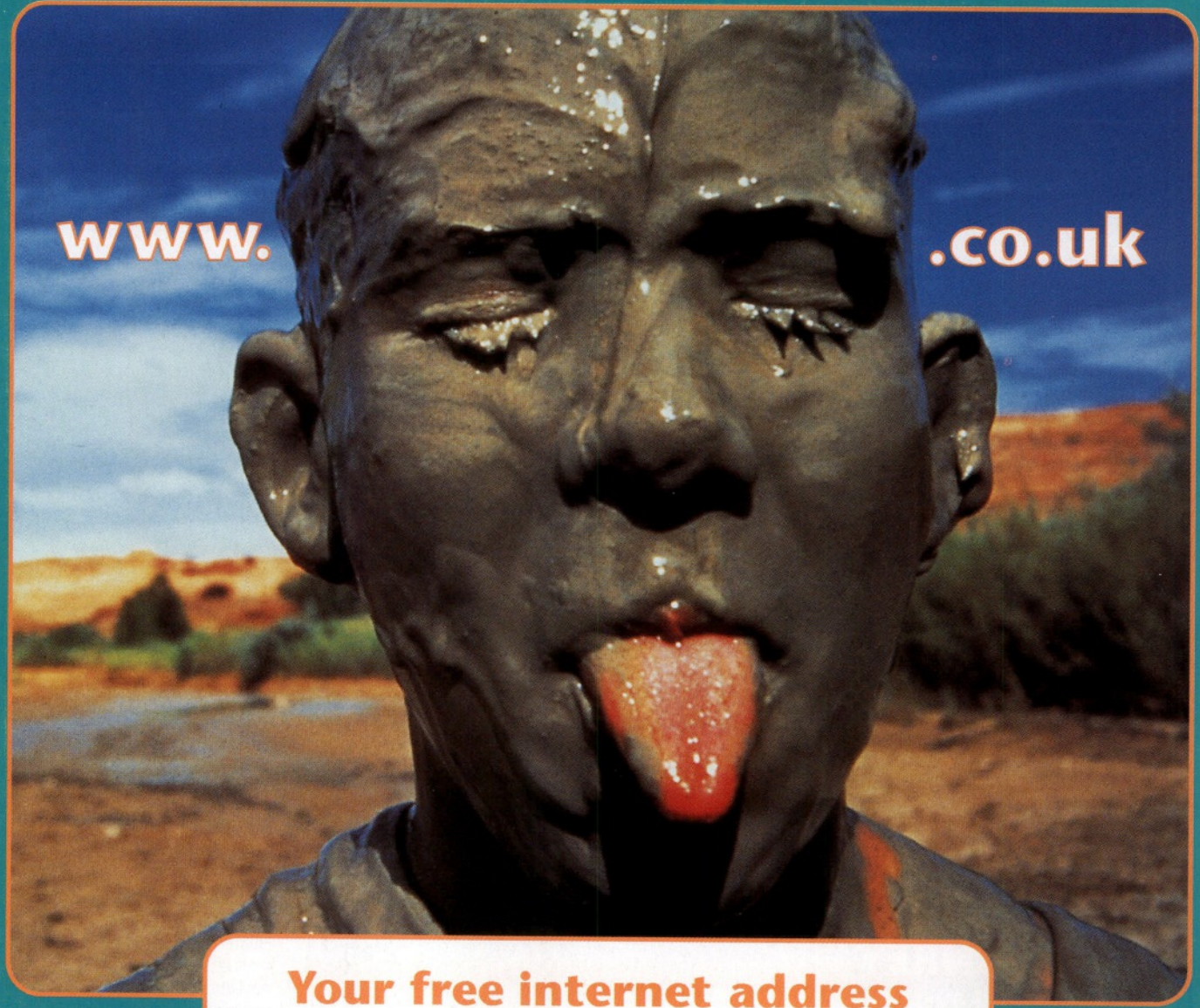
I've just bought your latest issue and I see the free CD has version 5 of Internet Explorer. I still have version 3 and I was wondering what would happen to that should I install the latest version.

I've got loads of favourite sites saved up and it would be quite a chore to have to write them all down or risk losing them. Is there a way I can save them before I install Explorer?

Ollie
Aa4oho@zen.sunderland.ac.uk
Don't worry – installing IE5 will automatically keep all your favourites from the previous version. Alternatively, programs are available from places like download.com to turn your bookmarks into an HTML file you can then access in any browser on your hard disk.

Dear thenet,

Please could print some addresses for email postcards to send to friends.



Your free internet address can be as individual as you are.

Now you can get a name for yourself on the web with your very own, exclusive internet address. In addition, you can have any number of e-mail addresses in the form of: anythingyouwant@anynameyoulike.co.uk attached to your free domain name.

Connection is quick and reliable, with unlimited free internet access at BT local call rates across the UK. You'll also have 20Mb of webspace and the reassurance of freephone 24 hour technical support.

There's never been a simpler, cheaper or more exclusive way to make the most of the worldwide web. So visit our website now at **www.freenetname.co.uk** or call us on freephone **0800 376 6910**.

freenetname™

It's free, it's easy, it's yours.

Conditions apply.

Mixed blessings: Singalonga postcard

I've looked everywhere and can't find any.
Matt
Matt@vincet.freeserve.co.uk
The best place to start is www.cardcentral.net, which lists free e-cards from right across the Web. You might also like to check out tunemail.com, which lets you send a song with your card.

Dear thenet,

I'm in the process of purchasing a PC and am interested in getting onto the Internet. I have been reading with interest the list of Internet Service Providers in *the net* – how exactly do I go about getting set up, and which would be the best to choose?

I've seen offers from BT and others advertising weekend calls for around £12 a month. Does this mean I will pay or have a free service provider? Will I have to arrange a contract for cheap weekend calls?
Louise Duffield
louised@fwbaker.co.uk

If you buy a new PC you'll probably get a free ISP with it to get you started online. There are plenty of other free ISPs out there, so keep checking the net for the latest offers. Deals like those offered by BT are a help in cutting the costs if you plan to be online for a long time – and don't forget to make your ISP one of your friends and family so you can save even more.

Dear thenet,

The Internet's all very well for lots of things – but, unfortunately, dating isn't one of them (*Online Dating*, October issue).

I've been using chat rooms and dating services to meet people for a couple of years now, but I've found few people describe themselves honestly in online ads. Compared with the tried and tested method of going down the pub and drinking copious amounts of alcohol, the Web is a washout.

James Carpenter
jrc299@yahoo.com
We suspect you may be right – certainly it hasn't done our man any good. Does anyone have any positive experiences of online dating?

CDshop.com & 101cd.com

IN OUR SEPTEMBER edition we published a consumer survey of online CD shops under the title of *Top of the shops*. The article reported our experience of which sites offered the best deals. We stated that despite ordering CDs from ***101cd.com*** and ***CDshop.com*** that the CDs failed to arrive at the time of going to press.

Unfortunately, because of a technical error, although the orders were placed with ***101cd.com*** and ***CDshop.com***, the order was not received by the two sites. It has only been since publication that this error has been discovered. No blame can be attached to either site as they would not have known that an order had been made. Had the orders been received, the delivery time would have been three days for ***101cd.com*** and about three days for ***CDshop.com***.

In respect of ***101cd.com*** the article also suggested that its range of titles was less than other sites which scored more highly. In fact ***101cd.com*** stores every CD available in the UK and US and has a total of 500,000 different titles and should have therefore been given a four-star rating and not three. The article was also misleading in terms of value for money regarding ***CDshop.com***. The survey failed to make clear that ***CDshop.com***'s quoted prices included postage and packaging. When set against other sites whose prices did not necessarily include postage and packaging, this meant that ***CDshop.com***'s value for money rating should have been four stars and not one.

We apologise to both ***101cd.com*** and ***CDshop.com*** for any embarrassment caused and we are pleased to correct the error.

c&www.firstmonthfree

Surf 'n' save

- Connect12 gives you up to 12 free hours of Internet calls every month, and if you join before October 31st we'll pay your first month's subscription.*
- If you spend more than 12 hours online each month, we promise that Connect will save you money on your telephone bill – compared to BT – or we'll give you back double the difference.**
- You'll get everything you'd expect from an ISP. Five email addresses, 20 MB of free web space, and unlimited Internet access.
- Connect packages give you up to 75 free hours of Internet calls a month, so however long you spend online we've got a package to suit you.

What can we do for you?™
FreeCall 0800 0923 003

Visit us at www.cwcom.net/savings to see how much you could save.
Or call 0800 0923 003 to subscribe (quoting ref: RACNET).

*Subscribe to any Connect package and you'll receive a credit of £5.99 in your first month.
**Price Pledge terms and conditions apply.

CABLE & WIRELESS

EXCLUSIVE SUBSCRIBER OFFER

Subscribe to the net and get two free tickets to switchedon, Olympia, London worth £12 12 issues for only £23.88

PLUS AS A SUBSCRIBER YOU'LL GET:

- Every issue delivered to your door
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Switched on is the first and only consumer Internet show in 1999. The show is designed to help you find your way around the Internet. This show runs from 26th - 28th November 1999

Hurry! Offer ends 9th November 1999

Terms and Conditions Open to UK subscribers only. Overseas rates are available on request by calling +44 (0) 1795 414 807. All applications must be received by 9th November 1999. Responsibility cannot be accepted for applications lost, delayed or damaged in transit. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of application. Please allow 14 days of receipt of your tickets and 28 days for receipt of your first issue. Final date for despatching tickets will be 12th November 1999. Switchedon at Olympia, London runs from 26th to 28th November 1999. Opening Hours are from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Please contact the customer service team on 01795 414 807 if you have not received your tickets by 15th November 1999. Tickets are subject to availability, while stocks last. Late applications will automatically be set up as £23.88 for 12 issues with no free tickets.

If it's on the Web then it's in thenet

thenet subscription order form

ORDER DETAILS

YES! I would like to subscribe to the net for just £23.88 and receive my two complimentary tickets to Switchedon

YOUR DETAILS BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____ Initial _____ Surname _____

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❑ I enclose a cheque for £23.88 made payable to **Haymarket Publishing Ltd**

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Or call us now on **01795 414807**, fax us on **01795 414555**,
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Overseas rates available on request. Offer open to UK subscribers only. Allow 28 days for receipt of first issue. Offer closes 9th November 1999.

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The name's Bond...

Become an online secret agent with our must-see guide to everything 007

PLUS

CANDID CAMERA
The strange world of the Webcam junkies

JOB'S A GOOD 'UN
Charge up your career with the Web

December issue on sale Wednesday 3 November

the thenet

UPPING THE AUNTIE

No4 BBC ONLINE
www.bbc.co.uk

If the BBC hadn't produced a site worthy of inclusion in Web Icons, we'd want to know why. Auntie has always been ahead of the game here – if you're under 30, your first furtive computer fumblings probably came at the keyboard of a BBC Micro. Then they got us connected; their Networking Club was one of the first public Internet services in the UK. And the BBC has had some kind of Web presence for five years – plenty of time to get it right.

More importantly, it is the world's finest public service broadcaster and – according to one employee – has 'the largest creative talent base in the country'.

So, does the site live up to these expectations? Yes, resoundingly. It is staggeringly good. In the smoke-and-mirrors world of the Internet, most sites promise much and deliver little. But every link from the BBC's unassuming homepage leads to content of a depth and quality that other sites would sell their servers for.

As you'd expect, there's a lot of material supporting BBC shows. But the producers at BBC Online have a horror of 'brochureware'; their term for Web content that serves as a puff for something else but is useless in its own right.

They have gone to some lengths to avoid this. The *EastEnders* site is a riot of interactivity; soon you will be able to create your own storylines and have them assessed by the show's scriptwriters. You can look at the evidence from the Square's murder trial and read Peggy's secret diary.

The idea – and it works – is to leverage the Web's unique properties to give viewers something they can't get from TV; to extend the reach, impact and life of the show. The best example of this is the new *Walking with Dinosaurs* project. The TV series is this year's flagship, and the most technically advanced the BBC has produced. But the Web site almost eclipses it, with weighty contributions from the experts who made the series alongside a dinosaur webcam.

Education gives you textbook content with all the Web's bells and whistles

What you're getting, in fact, is the fulfilment of the BBC's promise to inform, educate and entertain, in a medium where much of the content fails to show any of those qualities. The Education section is probably the best example of this; you get textbook content with all the Web's bells and whistles. Their WebWise guide is the finest Net tutorial we've come across, and features from health to languages offer the opportunity for real learning unmatched on the Web.

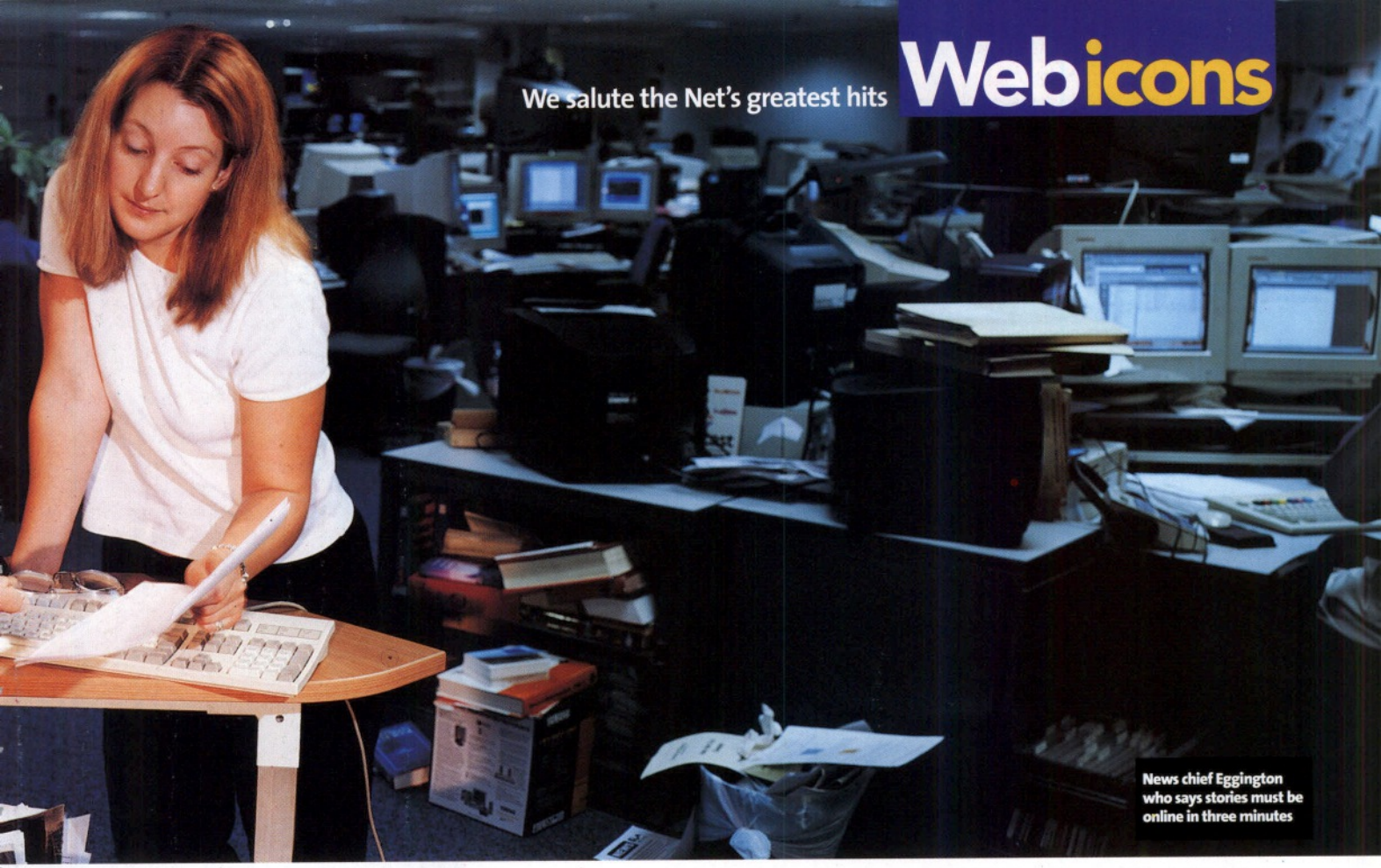
But the jewel in the crown is News. Established in '97, the operation now boasts 100 dedicated online journalists housed in a hangar-sized newsroom, supported by an army of designers and beavering techies.

The formidable Bob Eggington, the BBC news veteran who runs the operation, demands that all new stories must be written by a BBC staffer and appear online within

Nigel Chapman, Director of BBC Online

Webicons

We salute the Net's greatest hits



News chief Eggington who says stories must be online in three minutes

three minutes of breaking. Over 300 are produced every day – ten times more than their rivals – and every story and clip produced remains in the archive. There are now 300,000 available, a resource the BBC has never been able to offer before.

During the quake in Turkey they were receiving 20 email reports a minute

Usage doubles every four months, and now runs at about 1.8 million page impressions per day. That figure includes a lot of BBC correspondents, who get their breaking news here rather than from the newswires, and the entire Washington staff who stop to watch the Nine O'clock News online.

And it's news the users can influence. Eggington regards their letters – or emails, in this case – as content rather than an embuggerance. A team of readers sift through them. During the Turkish earthquake they were receiving 20 reports a minute from the disaster zone. Eggington set up a database for families that had been separated; 150 were reunited.

Criticisms? Very few – and mainly that the BBC is guilty of excessive modesty, of underselling a sensational set of services. It's astonishing that all this is done with just one per cent of the licence fee.

'We would always like more funding,' says Nigel Chapman, Director of BBC Online. 'The first thing is to show that we are using your money wisely. We can't undermine our core services. But the tide is running with us. There's no one to rival us, not in this country, the US, or anywhere on the Web.'

BBC ONLINE

WHAT IS IT? The unified Web presence of the British Broadcasting Corporation
LAUNCHED November 1997
TRAFFIC 100 million impressions (Aug '99)
WEB STAFF 400
BASE Bush House, central London
KEY FEATURES A rapid response news service with a massive archive of past stories, multimedia clips and stills. Sport, business and technology news and features. A network of Web sites for all the BBC's major channels and shows, allowing users to contribute to and interact with the BBC's output. An awesome range of educational resources, for everyone from preschoolers to Web novices to adult learners. TV and radio listings, a live news ticker and alert service

ONLINE OVERLOAD From war zones to Walford, get it online from the BBC

NEWS ONLINE

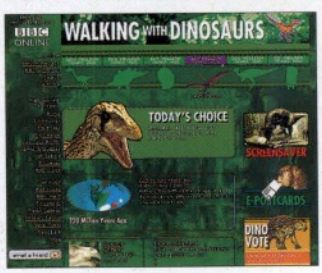
www.news.bbc.co.uk

The finest online news service in the world – probably. Within three minutes of a story breaking there will be a BBC-authored article posted, with pictures, audio and video clips, and analysis added as the story develops.

EDUCATION ONLINE

www.bbc.co.uk/education

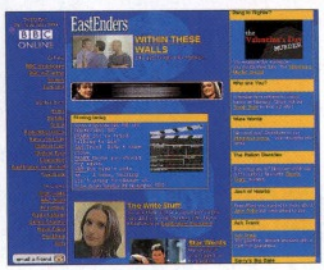
The Teletubbies' and Tweenies' home on the Net also boasts content for more mature learners. WebWise is a first-rate crash-course on getting wired. There's help with languages and health, and you can even take a degree with the OU.



WALKING WITH DINOSAURS

www.bbc.co.uk/dinosaurs

The TV series is this year's flagship, and one of the most technically ambitious the BBC has produced. The site goes one step beyond: same animators, same experts, but it's online and interactive.



EASTENDERS

www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders

There are plenty of people who prefer the site to the show. Got a question about used motors? Go to Ask Frank. Got some advice for Grant? Get it off your chest in the forum. Soon you'll even be able to write your own scripts.

WORDS: BEN OLIVER; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO

EARL OF SANDWICH Egg and cress online

SANDWICHES

www.sandwichesonline.com
www.sirbenslade.co.uk

The irrepressible Sir Benjamin Slade, Bt, owns a very grand house, a large slice of Somerset and the world's richest dog. But he will not rest until he has brought top quality nosh direct to the desks of the poor undernourished lawyers, accountants and traders of central London. If he happens to build a dinner dynasty in the process, all the better

In addition to his nifty line in sarnies, he's put his ancestral seat on the Web

'If you're a barrister working on a multi-million pound case, you don't want to have lunch in a restaurant. You don't have time, you won't have any privacy and you'll be hit with a big bill. What you want is to have the best bloody sandwiches in the business delivered direct to your door.'

Hence Sandwiches Online. 'You can't lose the menu or spill coffee over it because it's all on the Net, and it's always up-to-date. And we know we're giving you the best because we make everything ourselves. We don't cut corners.'

It's an attitude inspired by Sir Ben himself. An ancestor was made a baronet on a battlefield during the Peninsular War. But by the time the title passed to Sir Ben the family finances had dwindled, and he was sent to Australia to make his fortune. So did he?

'An aunt died and left me £22. That was the entire family fortune, so I had to do whatever kind of work I could get my hands on. In the end I made three fortunes and lost two, so I came back to Britain with a bit of money, yes.'

He worked as a miner, road-digger and gold prospector in Australia before setting up a shipping container firm with £100. The company made millions, and the man who used to smear himself in diesel to fend off flies in the fierce Outback heat plans similar success on the Net.

Experience has taught him that big fortunes are best made in new industries; hence his investment in the Internet – he plans on being the first aristocratic Internet millionaire. In addition to his nifty line in sarnies, he's put his ancestral seat on the Web, taking bookings for parties and weddings.

And you can read about Jasper, Sir Ben's loyal mutt and the richest dog in Britain. The crossbreed was left £50,000 'by a mother-in-law who didn't like people much.' Sir Ben is paid a princely £9 per day to feed and house the thing, as well as managing its money. Jasper's bankroll is up to £130,000, so expect a mighty legal dogfight when the black Labrador barks his last.

So what are the sandwiches like? We tried a selection: the roast beef was meaty and mustardy, and the office vegetablists enthused about the roast mushrooms and peppers. They were all up to the highest standards, as you'd expect from an early backer of Pret a Manger.

Similar success is predicted for his new venture. All rise for the first Baron Baguette.

WORDS: BEN OLIVER; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO

METER HEAD

Delivering utopia

www.unmetered.org.uk

This man is really angry. Erol Ziya is outraged at the amount of money you have to pay your phone company for the privilege of connecting to the Internet. He wants a world where we can all log on – and stay on – without worrying about a vast bill each month.

He's the spokesman for the Campaign for Unmetered Telecommunications, the organisation that aims to deliver this utopia.

But note the word 'unmetered': it doesn't mean free, and it's important to grasp the difference. The idea is that we should all pay a fixed monthly subscription for local calls, rather than paying by the minute.

It's similar to the way we pay for our television licence – a single fixed fee regardless of how much we use it.

Erol argues that it would also be a fairer way of charging. Your electricity company has to generate one watt for every watt you use, but making more local calls doesn't really cost the phone company any more.

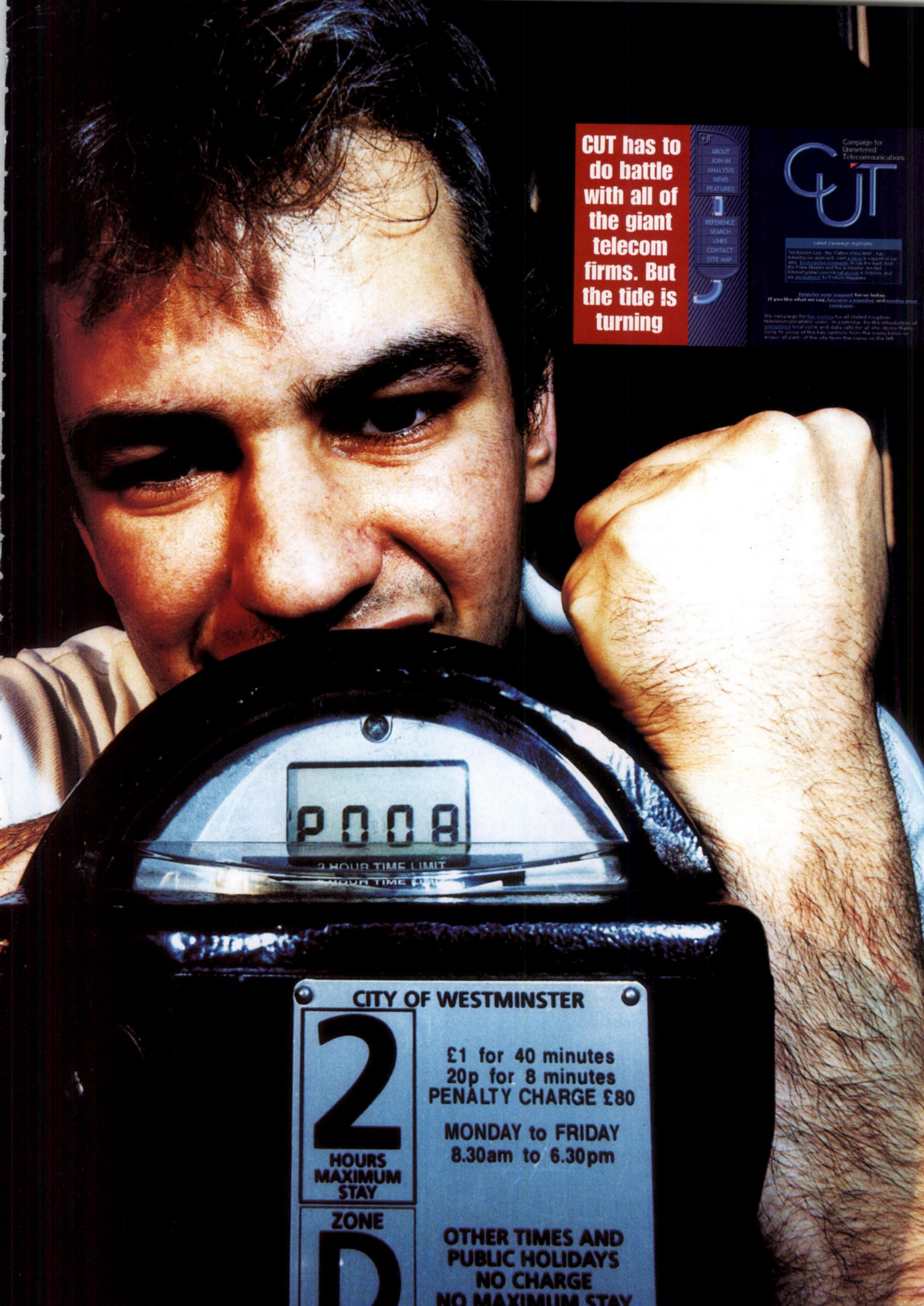
'When I joined the campaign I had reservations about it,' says Erol. 'Compared to East Timor, big phone bills don't seem like much of an injustice. But then you start to think about how important the Net is, and how much potential it has, and you realise that people ought to be able to exploit it fully.'

The Campaign now has 300 paying members and 6,500 supporters who have registered on the excellent Web site. It's a growing movement.

'The advent of the free Internet service providers has really boosted the campaign. Far more people are online now. It's great that they get free connections, but then they see their first phone bill and realise that there's still a price to pay.'

CUT has to do battle with the giant telecom firms, but it seems the tide is turning. Tony Blair and the DTI are making favourable noises, and it seems that unlimited Net access might not be far off.

'They can't keep charging the way they do now,' says Erol. 'It's a matter of when, not if.'


CUT has to do battle with all of the giant telecom firms. But the tide is turning
ABOUT
JOIN IN
ANALYSIS
NEWS
FEATURES
REFERENCE
SEARCH
LINKS
CONTACT
SITE MAP
Campaign for Unmetered Telecommunications
CUT
Latest Campaign Highlights
Register your support for us today.
If you like what we say, become a member and involve your company.
P00A
CITY OF WESTMINSTER
2
HOURS MAXIMUM STAY
£1 for 40 minutes
20p for 8 minutes
PENALTY CHARGE £80
MONDAY to FRIDAY
8.30am to 6.30pm
ZONE
D
OTHER TIMES AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS
NO CHARGE
NO MAXIMUM STAY

LOOKING FOR RARE TUNES

Can you track down that hard-to-find 45 through the Internet?

Anyone who's been online for longer than five minutes will know how easy it is to buy chart CDs. Visit any half-decent search engine and you'll find dozens of shops only too happy to flog you their wares – and picking up the latest releases is just as simple over the Web as walking into Our Price and demanding Boyzone's newest effort.

But what if you'd rather listen to Extreme Noise Terror than Everything But The Girl? How can you find the rarities and deleted discs you want without stumbling across one of the Net's many dark alleys? Join us on a whirlwind tour through a world where vinyl is still vital and Hawkwind are considered de rigeur...

TRACKING IT DOWN

BACK THEN... VS ...THE NET WAY

IN THE SHOP

Ah, the joys of the secondhand record store. The dank aroma of dust and vinyl merging into one. The seemingly impenetrable racks of ageing 45s. The funny little man behind the counter whose after-hours activities one can only guess at. 'Fifty pence for a Kim Wilde seven-inch, Sir?' Yes, please.

THE RECORD FAIR

Often advertised in town centres on small pieces of cardboard. Lots of men with beards haggling over the price of a Motorhead box-set – bargains will be scarce, as they all know far more about the whole thing than you do.

The online classifieds really are a great idea, especially for trading in obscure records

THE DREAM

That super-rare Beatles collectable lies buried at the bottom of the pile for £1.50. In a matter of hours you've sold it for five grand and spent the winnings on drink.

THE NIGHTMARE

An all-day tour of shops yields nothing but backache; you get cornered by a collector and bored for hours.

THE ONLINE SEARCH

Putting the name of your intended artist through a search engine will give you reasonable results, but for something more precise consider a specialist shopping site like ***www.shopguide.co.uk***, which compares prices across a range of sites.

THE SMALL ADS

Online classifieds are a great idea, particularly for trading in obscure LPs. GEMM (***www.gemm.com***) is the biggest and best out there, offering a wide range of genres and a secure environment. Browse the site's own catalogue, or link to other shops or individuals.

THE DREAM

That Flux Of Pink Indians B-sides collection pops into your basket in a matter of minutes thanks to the power of modern search facilities.

THE NIGHTMARE

You're inundated with 7,632 sites, the vast majority of which are illegal in 17 US states.

And the winner is...

While traditionalists may mourn the demise of the backstreet record shop, the Net really is the only way forward for the music industry.

PERSONAL TRANSACTIONS

BACK THEN... VS ...THE NET WAY

THE CAR BOOT SALE

You know the scenario: bloke clears out garage. A couple of things 'fall off the back of a lorry'. Before you know it you're knee-deep in mud and you've just bought Bananarama's entire back catalogue. OK, you might turn up a gem, but the chances are slim.

THE MAGAZINES

Record Collector – a magazine which really does do exactly what it says on the tin – has long been a bible for searching out obscure discs. Most of the advertisers are enthusiasts just like you, and can be relied on not to do a runner with your cheque.

Users tip each other off about any online bargains or else flog their own collections

THE DREAM

Some poor sucker's been hoarding extremely valuable records in his loft for years without realising it. He sells them to you for a pittance and you make your fortune overnight.

THE NIGHTMARE

That only-one-in-existence Elvis recording is actually a Des O'Connor out-take.

THE NEWSGROUPS

There are a whole host of newsgroups dedicated to rarities, and for the most part they're pretty friendly places. Users tip each other off about online bargains, or flog their collections at reasonable prices – though beware of simply parting with your cash on the spot. Try ***rec.music.marketplace.cd*** or ***rec.music.marketplace.vinyl***.

THE AUCTIONS

Most big auction sites offer dedicated music sections, which have the advantage of showing who you're dealing with. There are smaller music-only sites for enthusiasts.

THE DREAM

You build up a relationship with other newsgroup users, and quickly pick up a number of bargains, as well as an invite to visit LA and see your new friends.

THE NIGHTMARE

Some bloke you've emailed a few times runs off with your money, and you've got nobody to complain to.

And the winner is...

A close one, but commerce is still safer all round when conducted offline.

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; ILLUSTRATION: RIAN HUGHES

GET INTO THE GROOVE

The best resources for locating rarities and vinyl

ABBEY RECORDS
www.abbeyrecords.com
A wide range of second-hand vinyl in this user-friendly British shop.

ACTION RECORDS
www.action-records.co.uk
Heavy-going 'bargain' site, with plenty of rarities and the odd sale.

ARTIST SHOP
www.artist-shop.com
Alliance of 40 independent labels, covering prog rock, psychedelia and techno.

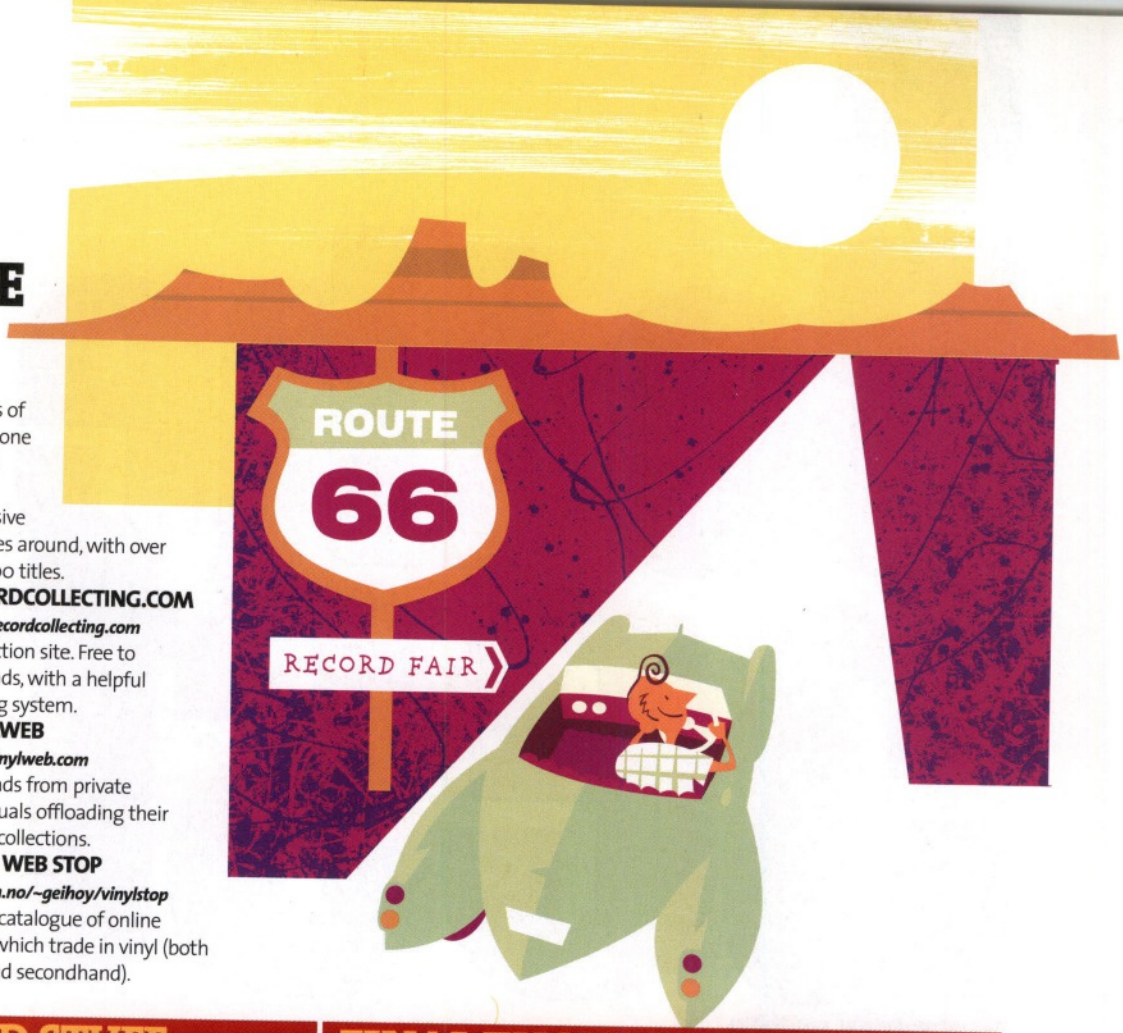
CELLOPHANE SQUARE
www.cellophane.com
Used CDs bought and old. Specialises in 80s and the delights of AOR.

MUSIC BY EMAIL
www.musicbyemail.com
Boasts of being one of the most extensive CD sites around, with over 250,000 titles.

RECORDCOLLECTING.COM
www.recordcollecting.com
US auction site. Free to place ads, with a helpful grading system.

VINYLWEB
www.vinylweb.com
Small ads from private individuals offloading their record collections.

VINYL WEB STOP
home.sn.no/~geihoy/vinylstop
Useful catalogue of online shops which trade in vinyl (both new and secondhand).



THE REALLY HARD STUFF

BACK THEN... VS ...THE NET WAY

AT THE GIG
Your search for that must-have obscure CD has hit a brick wall, until the band in question turns up to play near you. Thus you can get your hands on their music and enjoy a live gig at the same time. Hurrah.

THE FANZINE
Most bands, no matter how unloved and generally overlooked, have a few devoted followers. Your local independent record shop should stock fanzines or have contact details for record labels, enabling you to pick up records at a reasonable price.

THE DREAM
You're the envy of your music-loving mates – and if your obscure band make it big one day, your CDs will soar in value.

THE NIGHTMARE
After seeing the band, you realise they're not actually very good anyway, thus rendering several weeks' hard work completely pointless...

THE SPECIALIST SITES
No matter how 'specialist' your musical tastes, there's bound to be an online store to cater for you. Put it this way – we managed to find 'sounds of wildlife from the rainforests and wetlands of South America', so you should be able to get pretty much anything.

BAND'S OWN SITES
Most small outfits are wising up to the benefits of being online; likewise, small labels have started grouping together on sites like ***www.cdstreet.com*** to plug their wares.

THE DREAM
After years without those rainforest sounds, you've found a reliable supply line through the Net and can enjoy monkey mating calls in your own living room.

We even managed to track down a 'Sounds of the South American Rainforest'

THE NIGHTMARE
You still can't turn up the disc you want, and are reduced to spending your evenings in a darkened room, head in hands, sobbing quietly.

And the winner is...
With many sites offering try-before-you-buy audio samples, online shopping gives you more for your money.

FINAL THOUGHT

The world of rock 'n' roll can be a confusing thing. So many artists, so many records; and still the devil's got all the best tunes. The Internet takes all the hassle out of record-hunting, as it lets you get straight to the titles you want without wasting time browsing through hundreds of duds. And with e-commerce making the world a smaller place, locating that rare disc has never been easier. As with all things online, however, it's important to remember you don't know who you're dealing with. Stick to reputable sites and recommended sellers only and you'll soon be blessing the day you bought that PC.

The Internet lets you get straight to the titles you want without wasting time

Be the best

***at absolutely anything**

Ever wanted to be totally brilliant at anything? Then let the Web make you an instant expert

How many times have you been told: 'The Internet's good fun, but it can't actually teach you anything?' True, a cursory glance round the average Web directory might lead you to believe that cyberspace is populated exclusively by lust-crazed 15 year-old boys and the socially inadequate, but there's useful stuff out there, too. Really.

In fact, the Net can teach you almost anything – from basket-weaving to ballooning – and its interactivity gives it a head start over any other medium. Plus, the only thing you pay is your phone bill, so you can decide whether you're good at a subject without paying someone to tell you you're not.

We've put together an A-Z of things the Web can make you better at, and where to go to find out more. Remember us when those cheques start rolling in...

A AXEMAN

'Anyone Can Play Guitar,' Thom Yorke once claimed. Is he right?

BEST SITE ***www.betterguitar.com***

'No-one ever completely masters the guitar. There is always something new to learn,' claims betterguitar.com. The chances

are, you'll learn it in this fantastic database of tips and lessons, covering different styles and techniques.

TOP TIP 'Try listening to styles of music you aren't familiar with. You may not care for that particular style, but you should be able to appreciate good playing.'

SEE ALSO

members.aol.com/mikeyjake/guitar/guitar.html Links to every aspect of guitar playing, including songwriting and finding a label.

www.guitarjunkie.com Plenty of tips and tricks, plus some fantastic weird guitar sounds.

www.looknohands.com/chordhouse Stuck for a chord? There's 1,000 to choose from on this searchable gem. Also covers piano.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...

Why not advertise yourself on ***www.musicclassifieds.com*** and hope that Noel Gallagher sees your details when he's surfing.

B BETTING

It might be a mug's game, but some people are better at it than others.

BEST SITE ***www.gamble.co.uk***

If you've ever walked into a bookie's and been lost, why not bone up first? Gamble.co.uk offers tips in horse racing, cards, the lottery and slot machines.

TOP TIP 'Pay special attention to fast starters on slow courses. It is more difficult to manoeuvre on a muddy or heavy course, and these conditions will favour the horse that takes the early lead.'

SEE ALSO ***tips.sports.com*** Terminology and specifics explained, plus odds and tips.

www.sporting-life.com Not just betting advice, but news from every sport under the sun, too.

www.lottery.co.uk Get one step ahead of Camelot with this compendium of past results.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...

Join ***www.elite-racing.co.uk*** and own a share in your own horse.

Arai
Lou Reed
adidas
CENTURY
Christian Dior
LIBERTY
THE MAID OF THE MOUNTAINS

C COMEDIAN

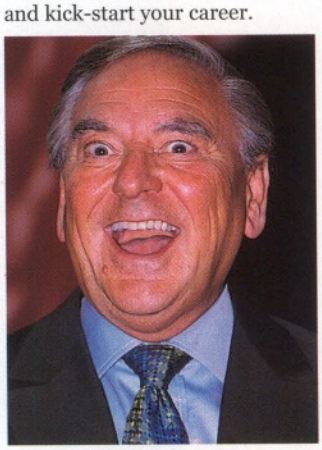
'My mother-in-law, I'm not saying she's fat but...'

BEST SITE
www.breakaway.org/openstudio/danasnow/wr/wr-home.htm
American author and comedian Dana Snow's site – dubbed 'The Art Of Comedy' – is a generous helping of advice for any would-be stand-up, covering preparation of material, finding a gig and making it big.

TOP TIP 'If the entrance applause is poor, be more social; woo them, perhaps slow down. You can thank them for listening or show sympathy for the hot day or long show. Avoid nagging them for being quiet or tired.'

SEE ALSO
rampages.onramp.net/~stevebo/faq.html FAQ section of a comedy newsgroup, which doubles as a guide to stand-up in general.
www.comedy.com Catch up on how the pros do it with this weekly compendium of comedy news, interviews and gags.
Shayne-michael.com/links.htm – This astonishingly thorough collection of links will service all your comedy needs.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Sign up with ***www.comedians.co.uk*** and kick-start your career.



D DJ

Put the needle on the record and become a turntable whizz

BEST SITE ***www.wicked-styles.com***
Every aspect of what the kids are already calling 'skratching' or 'mixing' is covered here, with hundreds of helpful tips, a glossary explaining terms from 'anti-skating' to 'transducer' and audio examples of the most popular DJing techniques – as practised by people called Q-Bert and RoliRho.

TOP TIP 'Some records have a centre hole that is cut a little bigger than the turntable platter's centre spindle. During scratching, the record tends to bounce around a bit. One trick to remedy this is to put a small amount of tape to make the hole smaller so the fit will be tight.'

SEE ALSO ***www.turntablism.com***
Handy samples of different skratch techniques, plus a generous FAQ explaining how to get yourself started.
www.netmix.com/bpm Before you ruin your favourite Lighthouse Family records, check out the equipment you need.
www.ss7x7.com Practise online with this wondrous 'Interactive music label,' using the pre-programmed tunes available here. Hours of happiness.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Register for ***www.ukdj.freeserve.co.uk*** and get yourself a wedding reception gig today!

E ENTREPRENEUR

Don't keep waiting for that big lottery win – transform yourself into the new Bill Gates online

BEST SITE ***www.inc.com***
The best resource for the entrepreneur. Inc lists high achievers and features reports on building business and finding backers in jargon-free language, with tips from success stories.

TOP TIP 'Your service to customers is only as good as your employees. To remind them that what they do affects customers, why not attach notes to employees' pay cheques thanking them for that week's achievement?' They're having a laugh, aren't they?

SEE ALSO
www.moneymakingindex.com
Thousands of get-rich-quick schemes listed and reviewed. Ranges from the extremely dodgy to the eminently sensible.
www.Entrepreneurmag.com
User-friendly guide to spending and making money, with high editorial values and tips.
www.vcr1978.com
Money to spend? An idea to sell? Entrepreneurs and benefactors get together on this site.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
You'll be reading about yourself in ***www.forbes.com*** next year.

G GOURMET

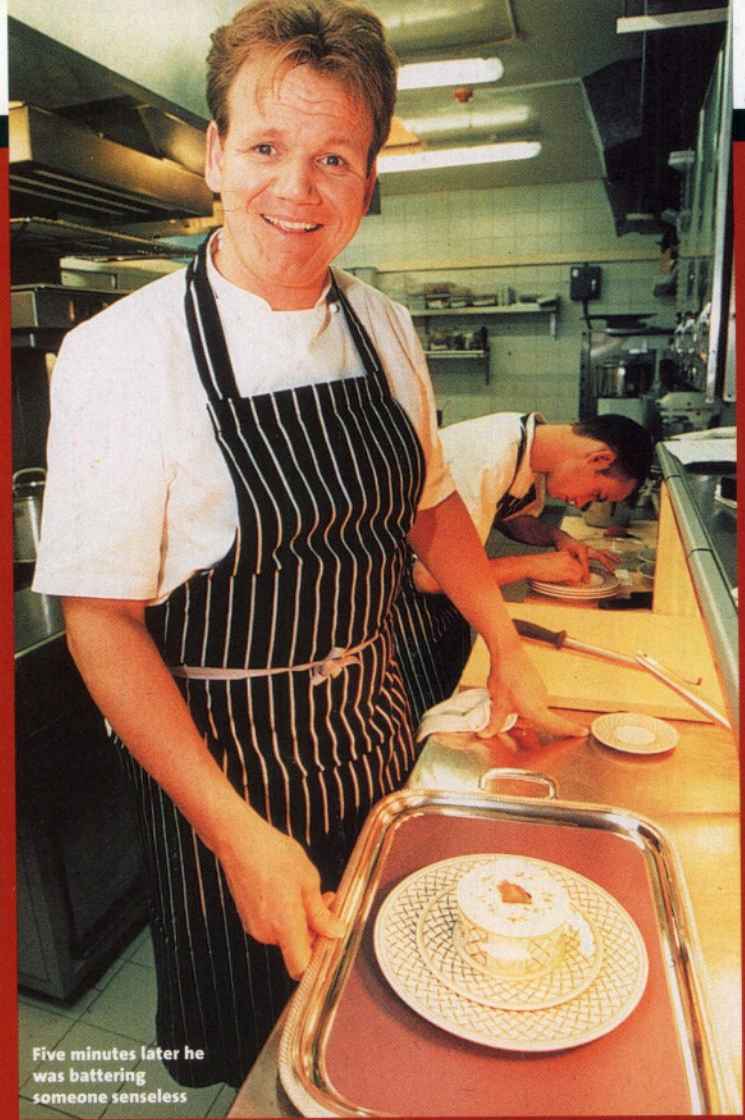
Whether you're cooking or simply eating, become a food bore in a matter of minutes

BEST SITE ***www.bettycrocker.com***
Betty Crocker just loves to help; in fact, she's a Fanny Craddock for the wired generation whose one aim is to help us become better cooks. This site will do just that: tell Betty what's in your fridge and she'll tell you what to whip up. Search her database for tasty recipes and cooking tips, or let her plan your weekly shop.

TOP TIP 'The safest way to empty an egg shell is with a turkey baster. Squeeze the bulb against a hole in the small end and let the contents ooze out a hole on the larger end. Don't press your mouth to the shell.'

SEE ALSO ***Soar.berkeley.edu/recipes***
Over 50,000 recipes are stored in this archive. Search by keyword or browse at leisure.
www.simplyfood.co.uk Carlton's food channel is a wealth of recipes, gastronomic titbits and restaurant reviews, with updates.
www.restaurants.co.uk
Reviews, recipes and even a round-up of pub grub. Check here before you make a booking.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Book yourself a course at ***www.leiths.co.uk.***



Five minutes later he was battering someone senseless

Most American 'soccer' sites are written for people who think the game is for the retarded

F FOOTBALLER

Even if you're too old to be the next Michael Owen, you can always improve your ball control

BEST SITE ***www.soccerclinics.com***
Most football (or, indeed, 'soccer') sites of an American origin are written for people who think the sport is a game for the retarded. Fortunately, Soccer Clinics' clearly-written, in-depth guides to a whole host of different skills hit the mark where other sites fail.

TOP TIP 'When selecting teams for small sided games, avoid letting the players select. Too often the same player is selected last, which leads to their feeling undervalued.' Tell us about it...

SEE ALSO ***www.soccercoaching.net***
Truly international site packed with articles, training tips and forums for players and coaches.
www.fifa.com/fifa/handbook/laws/index.laws.html
Learn the laws of the game from Fifa, and manage to stay on the pitch for the full 90 minutes.

www. nhsoccer.com/nhsa/jpill.htm 'Jeff Pill's Online Drills.' Silly name, but a good starting point if you want to bone up on coaching skills.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Look yourself up in ***www.footballnews.co.uk/players***

H HANDYMAN

Don't be at the mercy of cowboys – learn how to Do-It-Yourself

BEST SITE ***www.remodelonline.com*** Even Handy Andy might learn something here – come to think of it, he certainly would. Remodel has genuine useful tips on all manner of home improvement, building work and gardening, with so many links you'll want to weep. Throw in books, newsgroups and chat rooms – and we're afraid we'll have to come back and finish it next week, guv.

TOP TIP 'To remove wallpaper use one cup of vinegar to one gallon of very hot water. Wipe it on, wait a couple of minutes, then scrape it off.' Inspired.

SEE ALSO

www.bhglive.com/homeimp/docs/index.htm Plumbing, wiring and carpentry advice from the people at *Better Homes And Gardens*. Just remember – they accept 'no responsibility for injuries suffered'.

www.homesbydesign.co.uk Find a product or professional, or peruse a mountain of genuinely helpful advice.

www.interiorinternet.co.uk One-stop shop for home products, with a growing set of links to related secure shopping sites.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... You won't be one of the idiots who exposes themself to public derision at ***www.contractornet.com/tips/tiphorr.htm***

I INLAND REVENUE

Keep more of your hard-earned cash away from Gordon Brown

BEST SITE ***www.tax.org.uk*** With advice for both the beginner and expert, even the most clueless taxpayer will find something of use here. Self-assessment, national insurance and a host of other topics are covered in admirable detail, and they've even thrown in a jokes section for good measure.

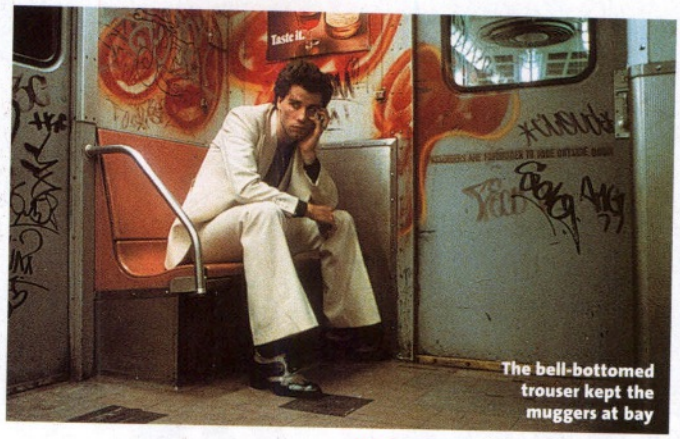
TOP TIP 'If you are an employee and required to provide tools or special clothing and your employer does not meet the cost of their upkeep you may be entitled to a tax deduction. There is a list of agreed deductions which you can claim without having to justify the amount to the Inland Revenue.'

SEE ALSO ***www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk*** Get your information straight from the horse's mouth – and be greeted with a cheery 'Good Morning.' Lord save us.

www.homesbydesign.co.uk Fill in all those cumbersome forms online; at a price, of course.

Listen.to/taxman Tap in your income and this helpful little tax calculator tells you how much you should be paying.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Check out how you could spend your savings at ***www.ferrari.it***



The bell-bottomed trouser kept the muggers at bay

J JIVE MASTER

Surely the Web can't show you how to salsa? Indeed yes, it can

BEST SITE ***www.dancetv.com*** If you've ever wanted to waltz (or foxtrot or swing, come to that) you'll get a taster of the steps and techniques here; the online tutorials explain dance terminology, etiquette and where to put your feet. Buy the video and CD and become a multimedia Patrick Swayze.

TOP TIP 'It is becoming increasingly common for women to ask men for a dance; however, no matter who asks, it is the man who always walks the woman back to her seat.'

SEE ALSO

www.eijkhout.net/lead_follow A huge FAQ on all styles of dance, including etiquette, tempo and competition.

www.danceart.com General links and resources, plus dozens of message boards covering every imaginable style.

www.dancebooks.co.uk Continue your learning with a wide variety of books and videos at this dance-specific store.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Make a living out of it at ***www.dancejobs.com***.

K KUNG-FU KING

Choose your martial art – and master it online

BEST SITE ***www.spheral.com/alma/martial/main.html*** Any site whose Technique of the Month is 'chopping the ankle' is certainly worth a second glance. Follow the Forms link for techniques, illustrated with line drawings; click 'Texts' for descriptions of fearful practices. Be careful out there...

TOP TIP 'As soon as you see the knee rising, put your weight on the rear leg. Slightly withdraw your body (by taking a rear si-liu bu for instance) and execute an inward circle, chopping the ankle.' That told you.

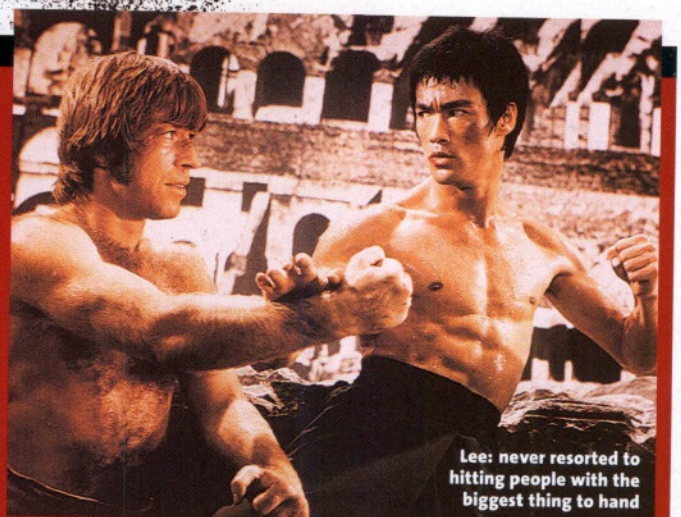
SEE ALSO

www.kungfu.cc The basic principles of Kung Fu. Worryingly, advice includes 'Hit them with the biggest thing around...'

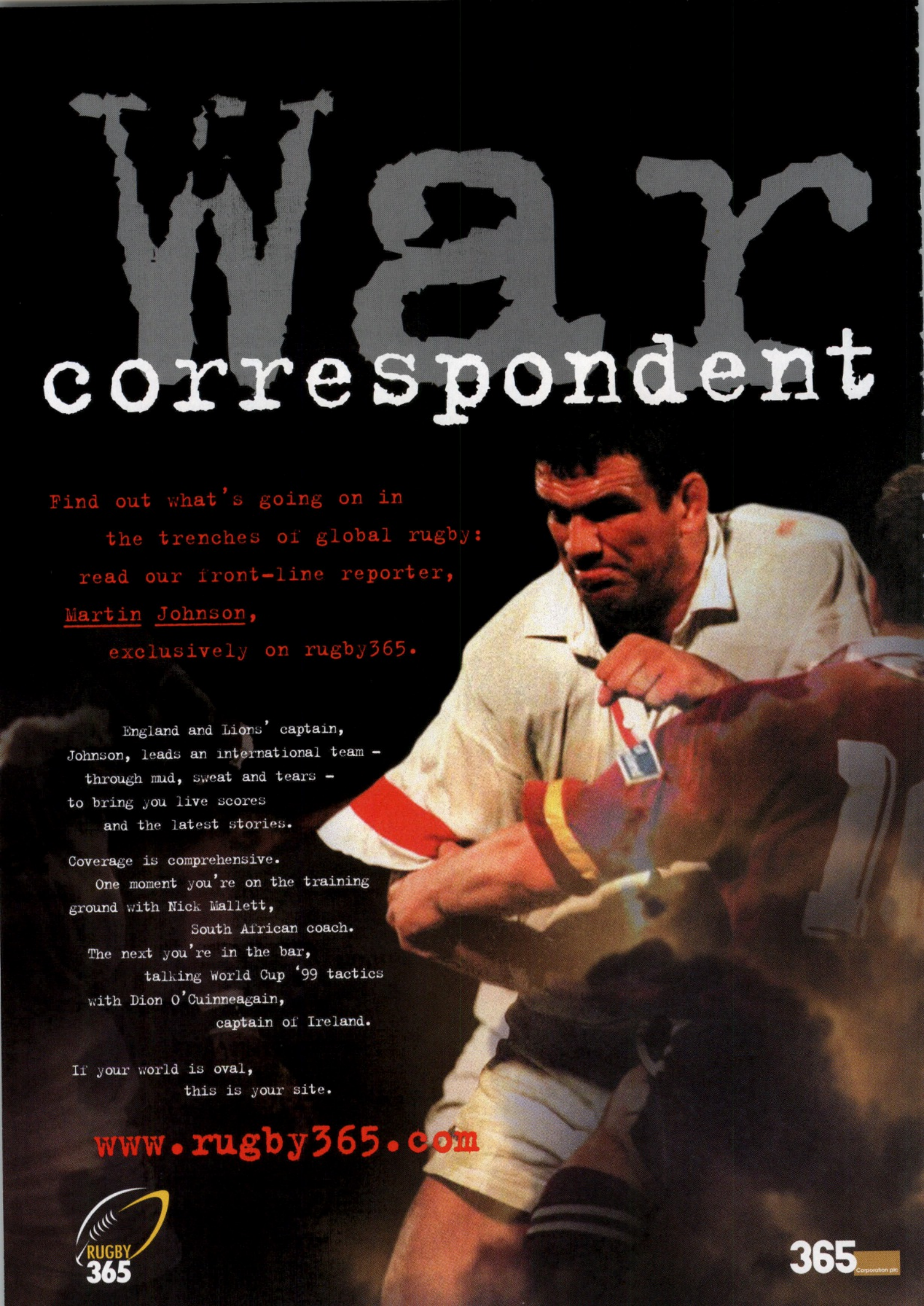
www.judoworld.com An interactive introduction to judo, with movie clips.

www.shorinryu.com/oldtec.htm A compendium of martial arts techniques postings.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... You won't feel out of place in the least at ***www.brucelee.com***


Lee: never resorted to hitting people with the biggest thing to hand

War correspondent



Find out what's going on in
the trenches of global rugby:
read our front-line reporter,
Martin Johnson,
exclusively on rugby365.

England and Lions' captain,
Johnson, leads an international team -
through mud, sweat and tears -
to bring you live scores
and the latest stories.

Coverage is comprehensive.
One moment you're on the training
ground with Nick Mallett,
South African coach.
The next you're in the bar,
talking World Cup '99 tactics
with Dion O'Cuinneagain,
captain of Ireland.

If your world is oval,
this is your site.

www.rugby365.com

RUGBY 365

365 Corporation plc

INSTANT EXPERT

L LEGAL EAGLE

Ever fancied yourself as an amateur Ally McBeal? Now's your chance...

BEST SITE ***www.lawrights.co.uk***
A wonderfully public-spirited effort, this; some kindly lawyer types have compiled Q and As covering 20 common legal problems. They'll also advertise your details for lawyers to advise you, and allow you to download important documents for a fee.
TOP TIP 'As the rights of unmarried couples are not as protected as they are for married couples, it is always a good idea to consider entering into a contract with your partner to decide how money and property should be divided if you should separate. These can be drafted by a solicitor.'
SEE ALSO
www.desktoplawyer.freeserve.net Famous 'draw up legal documents online' service, much vaunted in the tabloids.
www.leeds.ac.uk/law/hamlyn Valiant attempt at explaining the finer points of law in plain English.
library.ukc.ac.uk/library/netinfo/intnsubg/lawlinks.htm Continue your quest for knowledge through this comprehensive links page.
AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Get yourself a qualification at ***www.lawcol.org.uk***.

M MECHANIC

Don't let your local Ricky Butcher get his hands on your motor again

BEST SITE
members.home.net/daveandlois
While your average British mechanic would rather cut off several vital organs than give out free advice to the public, our American cousins are only too happy to help.

This site details the most common car complaints and how to fix them, as well as giving links for further reading and an email link for extra help.
TOP TIP 'The camshaft and crankshaft have to be in "time" with each other, for the engine to run properly. This is usually done with a belt or a chain. On some motors the clearance between the valves and pistons is so close that, if the timing is interrupted, major engine damage can result. Check with your dealer or manufacturer to see if this is a problem.'
SEE ALSO
Cartalk.cars.com/Info/Cyber Chumps/ Large collection of common car complaints, answered by helpful mechanics Tom and Ray.
www.autoshop-online.com/cchtml/mainttips.html The Car Care Council gives sensible advice for consumers, including basic tips.
www.carcarecity.com Enter the details of your vehicle and this site will email you reminders about tyre changes, insurance...
AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Your car won't end up at ***www.angelfire.com/ky/KyleAFC/accident.html***

N NOVELIST

Make a living from words without paying through the nose for a correspondence course

BEST SITE
www.capcollege.bc.ca/dept/magic/cmns/fwp.html
If you're more Naomi Campbell than Nietzsche, bone up on the basics of writing a novel with this hand-holding collection of tips, which covers everything from forming a plot, inventing characters and honing your style to getting published.
TOP TIP 'A mild-mannered person cannot achieve his goals by an out-of-character action like a violent assault, unless we have prepared the reader for it by revealing a glimpse of some suppressed aspect of his personality that can be plausibly released by stress.'
SEE ALSO
www.tipsforwriters.com E-zine for would-be writers, including much of the above plus interviews with successful scribes.
www.geocities.com/Athens/6346/ An inspired collection of links for all genres of writing and editing.
www.webcom.com/wordings/artofwrite/artofwriting.html Stuck for an idea? Then let the 'Instant Muse' dream up a plot and characters for you.
AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Make use of ***www.writersline.com***, the showcase for manuscripts.

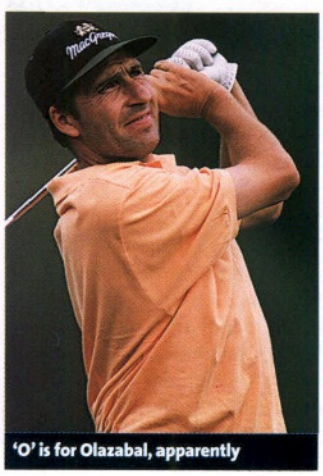
Fame started to take its toll on the young Ben Elton

O 'OLE IN ONE

Sharpen your swing and perfect your putt before you arrive on the green

BEST SITE ***www.golfacademy.com***
Though every piece of advice here is a link to somewhere else, you'll find no better golf site on the Web than the academy. Just choose your particular problem – be it mental strength, club selection or simply technique – and you'll be guided along to dozens of helpful solutions and useful tips. Truly, it's fore real...
TOP TIP 'Most amateur players are consistently short, because they cannot commit to a shot. A shot that is 30 feet past the cup, if not uphill from the hole, is better than one that is 30 feet short...if in doubt, choose the stronger club.'
SEE ALSO ***www.tagagolf.com*** A mountain of advice on all aspects of the game, a large part of it pictorial.
www.golfjudd.com Complete beginner? Don't know a birdie from a bunker? Get your first few lessons online for free.
www.bunkershot.com Free online mag featuring interviews, news and hundreds of links.
AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Get those natty golfing trews on this minute and find yourself a suitable course to show off your new-found skills at ***www.golfcourses.org***

Just choose your particular problem and you'll be pointed to dozens of helpful solutions



'O' is for Olazabal, apparently

INSTANT EXPERT

P PHOTOGRAPHER

Shed some light on what happens in the darkroom

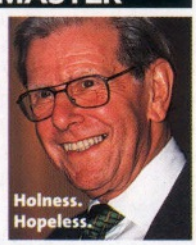
BEST SITE ***www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~tkemp*** Brit snapper Tim Kemp covers everything from the basics of taking pictures to using digital cameras and developing your own shots. It's all backed up by examples of photos, both good and bad; and a snap-happy FAQ section.

TOP TIP 'It is always best, if you are unsure of the correct exposure, to bracket the picture. This is done by taking the photo, then taking another one two stops slower and a third two stops higher. This will guarantee at least one good exposure.'

SEE ALSO ***www.photo-seminars.com*** Free online photography lessons, though you need to subscribe to take part. ***www.fotoinfo.com*** Technical advice, including a handy guide to processing times for the major films. ***www.88.com/exposure/index.htm*** Practice with an interactive camera, which lets you adjust the settings.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Enter those shiny prints in the Internet International Photo Contest at ***www.netstars.com/photocon/index-e.html***

Q QUIZMASTER



Leave pub quizzes with prizes rather than bruises

BEST SITE ***funtrivia.com/trivia.html*** As everyone knows, encyclopædias and textbooks can only teach you so much. FunTrivia will take care of the rest; quite simply, it's thousands upon thousands of facts, listed by keyword and fully searchable. The sort of site that the Web was built for.

TOP FACT 'In London in 1631, an authorised version of the Bible was printed, reading "Thou shalt commit adultery".'

SEE ALSO ***Members.home.net/destro/trivia*** A gateway to quizzes on any subject you can think of – and trust us, that really does mean anything. ***www1.kaplan.com*** An education database with links to fact-finding resources, quizzes and IQ tests. Great fun. No, really. ***www.88.com/exposure/index.htm*** – Quizzes and tests on specific Mastermind-style subjects, from TV shows to Egyptology.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Take on other know-it-alls in real time at ***www.trivia.co.uk/***.

R RELATIONSHIPS

Be successful with the opposite sex – on the Web or off it

BEST SITE ***www.geekcheck.com*** Aimed squarely at gentlemen with a limited knowledge of women (like those working in, say, the computer industry). Geekcheck dishes out helpful advice on finding and maintaining romance; plus there's links, personal ads and a Bachelor Of The Month feature.

TOP TIP 'Starting tomorrow, don't give him the time of day; call it an experiment. Tell him you must have been suffering from temporary insanity and now you realise you've made a mistake. You have no idea what you possibly could have seen in him. Then have a big laugh (to yourself) and walk away.'

SEE ALSO ***www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/2508/index.html*** Sensible, no-nonsense dating and marriage advice. ***homearts.com/depts/relat/oodprec1.htm*** Masses of quizzes, tests and articles on relationships. ***Biznet.maximizer.com/loveguru*** Tips on finding lure and resolving conflicts.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... You might just need ***www.gretna-weddings.co.uk***

T THESPIAN

Robert De Niro's waiting...will you be joining him?

BEST SITE ***plaza.powersurf.com/acting_tech*** Brush up on your technique with this impressive guide from theatre actress and 'Cher impersonator' Amanda Gray. Scripts, auditions and rehearsals are all covered, as well as finding an agent and landing that big part.

TOP TIP 'Look through the script for words that have a sound. For example, 'bright' should sound bright, 'dull' should sound dull, and 'ascend' should ascend.'

SEE ALSO ***www.igsmultimedia.com/greenroom/greenroom.htm*** Techniques, and a mailing list for wannabe thespians. ***www.execpc.com/~blankda/acting1.html*** Links to acting resources, and a recommended reading list. ***www.startips.com*** Cute kid? Make them the next Macaulay Culkin and watch the cash roll in.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Put your details on ***www.actorsnet.com***, a growing database of professional actors.

S STYLE GURU

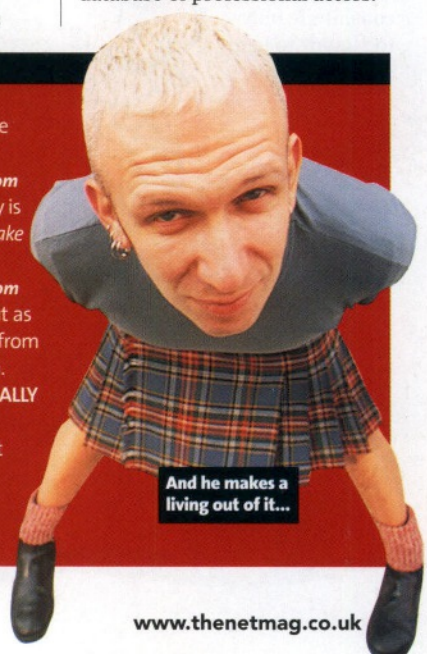
Correct those fashion mistakes with the Web's clothiers

BEST SITE ***www.manslife.com/clothes*** If your wardrobe resembles something left outside the Salvation Army in a black bin liner, this is the idiot's guide you need. Men's fashion is explained in detail (one section is entitled 'How To Dress Yourself') and there's a guide to choosing the right clothes for your 'body type.'

TOP TIP 'Fit is crucial for the short man since every detail – jacket length (should cover your bottom), and pants length – will make you look that much dapper.'

SEE ALSO ***www.homearts.com/worldofstyle/*** All the tips and tricks from women's mags the world over. ***www.leahfeldon.com*** Yes, her book really is called *Does This Make Me Look Fat?* ***www.cosmomag.com*** Because you might as well get your tips from the horse's mouth.

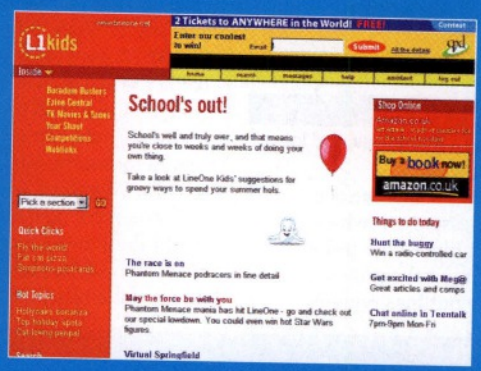
AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD... Make sure you get yourself down to ***www.london fashionweek.com***



MUCH MORE THAN JUST FREE INTERNET ACCESS

The UK's largest FREE content provider

- **RocketTalk**
  An Internet 1st - send and receive instant voice messages via your PC!
- **PING!**
  Chat in real time with our new Web based instant messaging
- **Shopping**
  Exclusive travel and shopping discounts
- **Money**
  Track your own personalised shares with our unique My Portfolio



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  Boredom-busting, action packed Kids Zone
- **Community**
  Britain's liveliest online community
- **Sport**
  Goal Flash delivers the latest scores to your desktop as they happen!
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  from the industry's top performing, fastest and most reliable Internet service provider, as recommended by Which? magazine.

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for your FREE start-up pack or register NOW online

www.lineone.net
to join the UK's largest FREE content provider

plus
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Multimedia CD-ROM & FREE £5 amazon book voucher!

FREE unlimited Internet access
FREE membership
FREE 5 email addresses
FREE 24-hour online support

be@one with
LINE ONE
www.lineone.net

U USE THE MARKETS

Confused by the Stock Market? You won't be any more...

BEST SITE ***www.premier-pages.co.uk/investor/index.htm***

Playing the Stock Market is a lot like going into battle with people far bigger and smarter than you – so arm yourself first. Investors Web sets out the fundamentals of trading in plain English, and helpfully summarises the latest tips from the print and online press. Impartial and impressive.

TOP TIP 'Every time you buy a batch of shares, set a stop-loss below which you will not let the share price fall before selling them. When you become adept at technical analysis you will be able to determine the appropriate level of stop loss to set. In the meantime, we suggest that you use a value 7.5 per cent below the price you paid.'

SEE ALSO ***www.hemscott.com/equities/gloss.htm*** Complex financial terms made simple. Just what is a Horizontal Ratio Analysis, anyway?

www.moneyweb.co.uk Idiot's guides to all aspects of money, including investments and pensions.

www.bigwig.net/abc/ukinvestment.htm Links to every money-related site that matters.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...

Make yourself a fortune on ***www.daytrading.com***.

V VINTNER

I'm getting a hint of oak, and lots of raspberries...

BEST SITE ***www.intowine.com***

The very essence of wine, without a hint of the usual snobbishness about it. IntoWine outlines regions, vintages, storage tips and even biblical references, as well as linking to the finest crop of wine sites on the Web. Bottoms up...

TOP TIP 'More wine is ruined by being too warm than too cold. A wine that is served too cold is easily warmed, but a wine served too warm can be difficult to chill. Therefore, when in doubt, serve it colder than you might think necessary. A wine that is too warm tastes alcoholic and is not a pleasure to drink.'

SEE ALSO ***www.wine-lovers-page.com*** Intelligent writing on wine, with forums and useful printable tasting forms. This is a true connoisseur's delight.

www.grapevineweekly.com A world's worth of news and reviews under one handy roof.

www.winespectator.com The best-known vin zine on the Internet. Always something new to discover.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...

Start making your very own house white or red with a little help from the online experts at ***www.geocities.com/NnapaValley/8280/index.htm***

X X-FILES

The truth really is out there... just maybe not round here

BEST SITE

www.geohanover.com

'Extra terrestrials ARE real,' begins geohanover.com. And here the fun starts. These folks are so convinced of UFOs' existence they've devoted a mammoth of a site to alien sightings, pure conjecture and – wait for it – what they claim is an actual message from an alien life form. You'll laugh. And then you'll cry.

TOP TIP From An Alien Being 'Continue your growth; continue to evolve; and be mindful of the energies; make certain that they are utilised properly. So be it.'

The dwarf photographer caught Mulder and Scully doing the stoop

SEE ALSO

www.forteantimes.com The chronicle of all things weird features the usual eclectic mix, plus some fantastic links.

www.bufora.org.uk It's not just middle-aged Americans who see little green men: here's Britain's foremost UFO organisation.

Members.aol.com/phylata/conc.html Worried by the possibility of an alien invasion? Don't worry: these guys have already worked out how to save the Earth.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...

Start making your own, with a little help from ***www.geocities.com/NapaValley/8280/index.html***

'Not me, mate. You want that George fella'

These folks are so convinced of UFOs' existence they even claim to have a message from an alien on their site

W WIZARD

As Paul Daniels once so wisely said: 'That's Magic!'

BEST SITE ***www.rufy.com/magic***
A site that makes the magician's art so simple, you too could be married to Claudia Schiffer. Tricks, for both beginners and the more advanced, are explained in detail, and there are tips on presentation, mastering your audience and building your career.

TOP TIP 'Act like your hand is empty. If it looks like you don't care about the hand with the coin in it, no one else will care about that hand either. Try doing the trick for yourself without a coin and see where your hand would go naturally.'

SEE ALSO
www.allmagicguide.com Enter the magic portal, with thousands of links, the latest news and shopping opportunities.
Magicland.virtualave.net Tips and tricks submitted by fellow magicians, including, of course, the infamous Vanishing Knot.
www.magic-interactive.com Into mentalism? It's a form of illusion – get a fuller explanation on this delightfully-presented site.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
You'll need to get yourself a membership at
www.magiciansalliance.com

Y YOUTHFUL

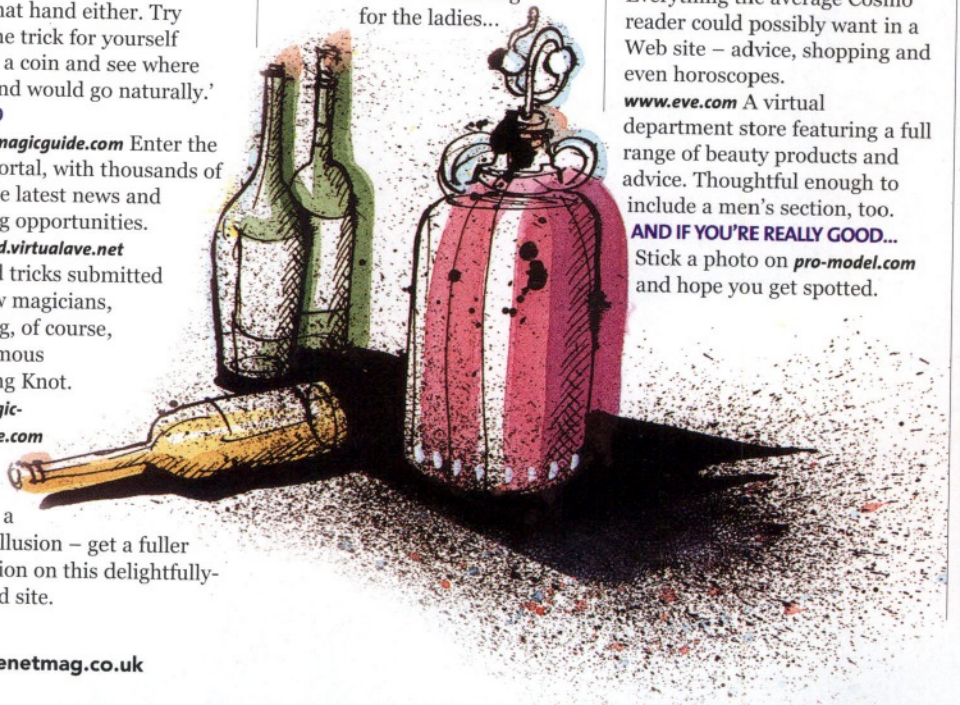
Pick up the tips – and the products – to take years off you...

BEST SITE ***www.beautychop.com***
OK, so it's pretty standard fare – beauty tips, tips from the stars, make-up. But at least beautychop.com does it with a certain sense of humour, and avoids the shameless plugs for specific products its rivals have succumbed to. Something for the ladies...

TOP TIP 'Always cleanse your face twice when removing make-up. This is a tip which all estheticians know, but for some reason the general public does not. Your skin does most of its healing and repair while you sleep.'

SEE ALSO ***www.menshealth.com*** ...and something for the gentlemen. The magazine for people with far too much time to spend in the gym and not enough knowledge of the inside of public houses.
www.beauty-channel.com Everything the average Cosmo reader could possibly want in a Web site – advice, shopping and even horoscopes.
www.eve.com A virtual department store featuring a full range of beauty products and advice. Thoughtful enough to include a men's section, too.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
Stick a photo on ***pro-model.com*** and hope you get spotted.



Z ZODIAC

If it's good enough for Russell Grant, it can't be all bad...

BEST SITE ***astrology-numerology.com/astrology.html***
No matter how seriously you take your horoscope, the suspicion will always remain that somebody has made it up in five minutes' flat. Michael McClain clearly takes a little longer; here he explains in painstaking detail the process of interpreting birth charts and creating your own horoscope. Good fun, if nothing else.

TOP TIP 'While you usually have freedom of choice or free will, the horoscope does reflect natural inclinations that you have to live with, lessons you have to learn and problems to be solved. It may be thought of as merely an abstract formula showing the energies that you've been given, or tasked.'

SEE ALSO ***www.zodiacal.com*** Moon charts and detailed technical information for the would-be astrologer, plus an index of useful articles.
Thenewage.com Look for the handy beginner's guide to what star signs mean and how to interpret them.
www.astroadvice.com Find out more about astrology – or just read your daily horoscope while you're there.

AND IF YOU'RE REALLY GOOD...
You'll spend an inordinate amount of time at ***www.russellgrant.com***

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; MAIN PICTURE: NICK WRIGHT; STYLING: JUICE; ILLUSTRATIONS: ANTONY RULE; PICTURES: REX, RETNA, KOBAL, ALLSPORT

Fancy seeing you here...

You never know who you'll meet online. As well as you and me there's a star-studded cast of rich, beautiful and famous Net users

IT'S OFFICIAL. THERE'S MORE TO Elizabeth Hurley than a seductive smile and a dress held together with safety pins. You may feel that there doesn't need to be any more to her; you may feel that the catsuit scenes in *Austin Powers* were more than enough to justify her existence – but you would be wrong. Liz is, in fact, a bit of a renaissance woman: a beauty with the savvy to run a film company, a top model who can read a balance sheet as well as tell you what the latest colour in lipstick is.

From premieres to pitch meetings, Ms Hurley is a busy, busy girl. At the moment, she is marooned on a film set in Nova Scotia, so how is she supposed to keep up with what's happening in the world of fashion, make-up, film and all her other myriad interests? The Internet.

Of course. Liz is part of a growing band of celebrities who don't just sit back and leave the online world to their fans; she's actively involved in setting up Web sites for her projects, talking to people online and generally surfing the Net with the rest of us.

Apparently, Liz has always been a communications and control freak – 'As a producer you're concerned with absolutely everything' – and the Internet allows her full access to everything she needs to know. Hugh Grant has been known to complain about the fact that she wakes up with faxes strewn across her face, and she insists on receiving her schedule every morning, no matter where she is, from her office in London. She loves the speed at which Net information reaches her and is known to surf away the long hours waiting on film sets.

A flick through Liz's interests and concerns hints at several surfing opportunities. She might visit ***www.savethechimps.org***, since she's a supporter of The Born Free Foundation and her production company is called Simian Films, or ***www.angelfire.com/pa/clash3/*** to relive her days as a devoted Clash fan, or ***www.celebratinglife.org***, a site promoting awareness and research into breast cancer, a cause of which Liz is an avid supporter (she's even written an article about it which you can access online at ***www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Bungalow/1541***). Liz has also expressed an interest in the Catholic religion, so maybe she'd find something at the Catholic World News site at ***www.cwnews.com***.

IT'S TOUGH AT THE TOP

Contrary to popular opinion, most people in the public eye do not have armies of employees and hangers-on to live their lives for them. They do most of it themselves – and more and more celebrities are finding the Internet an indispensable friend for work and leisure. Just like the rest of us, they never have enough time, so being connected is a great asset. Also like the rest of us, their interests range from the global to the everyday, and the Internet can satisfy them all.

The world of a top film star is often reported to be a lonely one...

Patsy Palmer and Gail Porter: committed to charity chat sessions

Bono promotes his Third World debt cancellation concerns over the Web at ***www.atu2.com***; Gordon Kennedy does his grocery shopping online; Adam Sandler released a short film through his Web site; and Cindy Margolis, the Net's number one pin-up girl with an image that's been downloaded over 56 million times, thinks the Internet is so wonderful that she learned about computers in order to get involved with the design of the *Austin Powers* site. As we keep telling you, it's all happening online, and a lot of celebrities agree.

The world of a top film star is often reported to be a lonely one. Is this why actress Sandra Bullock says she used to 'write freely on America Online'? Was she surfing for penpals? Someone to chat to during the long hours on location? Hardly likely, since she's one of the most popular actresses in Hollywood.

Actually, Sandra just really likes the Internet, even though she doesn't have as much time to surf as she would choose. She rubbishes the idea that we're all going to become umbilically linked to our computers, saying that the technophobes are being alarmist: 'I think any time anything new like this comes out, it's always going to seem a lot more frightening than it's going to end up being. When the telephone was invented, I'm sure people thought we would

WORDS: VICTORIA WILLIAMS; PICTURES ANDRE RAU/H&K/KATZ, RETNA, REX

David Bowie: just don't mention those Tin Machine Web sites

Adam Sandler: the Web's first celluloid celebrity?

RETNA, REX

never speak to each other person-to-person again, but of course we do all the time. You just have to balance it out, like anything.'

Bullock does, however, admit to a few occasions where the easy access the Internet offers has not worked in her favour. 'On the Internet, I've had people track me down, and I'm not under my name. Who am I to think that I'm not capable of being found, just because I'm on a piece of machinery?'

Maybe she's just taken her role in the techno-thriller *The Net* (dodgy movie, great title) a little too seriously. To remind her what a wonderful place the Web is, *the net* has taken the liberty of looking up some sites devoted to her favourite things – salsa dancing, rock climbing and Tom Jones. A surf through ***www.salsamundo.com*** should get her toes tapping, and checking out ***www.alaska mountaineering.com*** guarantees a breath of fresh air. As for Tom Jones, there's ***hometown.aol.com/connect96/tjtv*** – although it's an unofficial site, so Sandra may find it a tad difficult to email Tom her knickers.

FOOTBALL CRAZY

Another beauty with brains who's a regular on the Web is Lisa Rogers, co-presenter of *Grudge Match* and Radio 5's *Sorted*. She first got online when she was working as an assistant producer on the first series of *Mel & Sue's Light Lunch*: 'Being the progressive, funky company that Princess Productions are, they had all their staff on the Internet before most other TV companies. It made life so much easier.'

Lisa doesn't just use the Internet for work, though, and spends a lot of time while she's hanging around in the studio checking what's online about Arsenal FC. She also confesses to sneakily checking out the unofficial Spurs sites, 'to see what the poor bitter scum are writing about us'. Of course, as she's a bit of a babe there are fan sites devoted to her, which she says she doesn't look at although her friends report back what people are saying about her.

'On the Internet I've had people track me down...'
Sandra Bullock

Rogers plans to use the Internet more in the future, 'especially for shopping – my weekends are always filled with football so I never get a chance to go to the shops'. But she'd like to avoid some of the more bizarre sites she's come across, like the one that showed 'a woman throwing up into another woman's hands while she was in the bath – don't ask'. No, I don't think we will.

Moving on swiftly to the kinder, gentler world of online transvestism, Eddie Izzard is a big fan of the Internet and his personal site (***www.izzard.com***) is a great source of Eddie news, trivia, and observations about life. He's currently writing an interactive online novel, *The Liar, The Midwitch and the Bad Crumble*, in which Web users are invited to continue the prose from where he's left off.

There is a temptation, of course, as with so many celebrity sites, to wonder how active a role the star plays in the running of the online presence. Do Eddie's fans' comments reach him? 'Yes, yes, bloody yes – I do read the message board,' Eddie says, although understandably he finds it impossible to reply to everyone individually. 'I worry about replying to messages because I think if I do then I'll get more messages to reply to, and then no more comedy from me as I will be nailed to the computer.'

Izzard does, however, enjoy wasting his fans' time (in the nicest possible way) by sending them off on Internet wild goose chases (check out ***www.thebigredroom.com*** and ***www.dejavu.com*** to see what we mean). One of his favourite sites is The Bad Dog Chronicles at ***www.baddogs.com***, where dog owners can swap stories of canine misbehaviour.

TUNE IN, TURN ON

The music world has always been up for any new developments in technology and the Internet has proved to be as popular with music stars as with their fans. George Michael is excited about the possibilities of joining up with other artists over the Web. 'Within a few years you'll be able to make music with people from other cultures online. You'll be able to work together to create things that would never happen otherwise. I can only imagine the kind of sound that potentially could come out of this type of revolutionary technology.

'I still think music is one of the greatest gifts God gave to man and I think that although the Internet has some very scary possibilities, it will create a whole new wave of multicultural music.' We asked what George's favourite Web site was but he just said 'You don't want to know' (presumably it's those scary possibilities).

A musician whose name crops up time and time again online is David Bowie. Bowie loves the Internet and the Internet loves him back (if you just type 'Bowie' into your search engine, your computer may explode). His cool Web site (***www.davidbowie.com***) with its state-of-the-art graphics, links, info and even a songwriting competition,

Eddie Izzard: will he include tales of badly behaved dogs and web sites in his show? Fingers crossed...

Red Ken: will the possible future mayor be calling the comrades to arms online?

Welsh windbag in 'Attack Of The 50ft Sandra Bullock' shock...

'The Internet is the beginning of civilisation as we know it' Douglas Adams

It's not only celebrities from the entertainment and charity worlds who value the Internet. Politicians are also waking up (slowly) to a new way of reaching people. Ken Livingstone, likely to be Mayor of London if the Blairites don't stitch him up, loves the possibilities the Internet offers for 'a new government set-up'. So enamoured of the Web is he that, if elected, he plans to publish every official document (bar personnel files and contracts) that the new London Assembly produces, on the mother of all governmental Web sites. 'We're designing for the next century, not the last one,' he says, adding that he wants the new authority to be completely accessible to its 12 million constituents.

When he's not concentrating on his race for the hot seat, you're most likely to find Ken surfing over to the Natural History Museum (***www.nhm.ac.uk***). He says that if he had more time he'd like to look up sites for the US equivalent in New York and the Smithsonian in Washington. No problem, Ken – once again *the net* knows where to go. Try ***www.amnh.org*** for The American Museum of Natural History (where we particularly recommend The Hall of Biodiversity) and ***www.si.edu*** for The Smithsonian Institute.

Most of the celebrities you'll find on the Internet are fairly recent converts but Douglas Adams, author of *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*, has been online since 1983. He didn't have much company at first. During the early days he was on AppleLink, 'which allowed me to be in email contact with about four people'. Now that the Web is up to speed, Adams is thrilled with its possibilities (although he admits to being like the rest of us and mostly using it 'for fiddling about, and instead of smoking').

Adams is responsible for two sites of his own (***www.h2g2.com*** and ***www.douglasadams.com***), which he continues to be heavily involved with, but he also listens to *The Today Programme* on BBC Online since he moved to California, and tracks the Hollywood Stock Exchange (***hsx.com***) 'for seeing how other people think the movie project is coming along' (*Hitchhikers* is being given the Hollywood treatment). 'Otherwise,' he says, 'I tend to use my own site for interacting with fans.' He's also a keen online shopper, buying extra-length jeans at ***www.eddiebauer.com*** and most recently a book about coelacanths – which confirms our view that you really can get almost anything over the Web.

As far as Adams is concerned, the Internet is 'the beginning of civilisation as we know it'. We're glad to know that all sorts of famous people share our obsession. Plenty more celebrity folk are bound to be joining us online soon – and we'll keep you posted.

is a testament to his love of the Web world. He says that he sees the Net as an extension of his thought processes: 'I find that our minds go so fast that we can't possibly physically carry out all that goes on in our brains.'

Bowie hosts regular online chats with such stellar guests as Mick Rock and Boy George, and keeps his site up to date with his own artwork as well as odd bits and pieces that have captured his imagination. He's also dead impressed with the numerous unofficial Bowie sites: 'I'm in awe of so many of the fan sites. I think they're quite remarkable and I depend on them a lot for information about what I'm doing.' You'll find one of the best of these at ***www.bowiewonderworld.com***.

While music remains Bowie's primary concern (his new album, *Hours*, will be released over the Web in MP3 – drop in at ***www.liquidaudio.com*** for details) he also spends time online at sites that reflect his other interests. Some of his recommendations are ***www.art-connection.com***, ***www.modernpainters.com*** and, of course, ***www.i-iman.com***, a site devoted to his very beautiful wife.

Like the man who loved the product so much he bought the company, Bowie has recently set up his own ISP. You can sign on to it via his official site – so if you want to you can be a permanent part of his world.

Lacking such a global following (yet) but with equal enthusiasm for the Net are The Crocketts, a snarling quartet of rockers about to embark on their first headlining tour following the release of their maxi-EP *Nintendo Fallacy* and a stint supporting The Stereophonics. Although vocalist Dan Boone and bassist Rich Turpin admit that they first got interested in the Web in order to 'nick fit sounding birds' email addresses', they now use it all the time while on tour, to let their fans know what's happening and to keep themselves amused.

It seems that the Internet has all sorts of uses for an up-and-coming band. 'A few people have transcribed some of our songs, so that's pretty handy for remembering how stuff goes, or how it should be played properly,' they confess – and they check out their various fan sites 'at least once a week, to keep our huge rock star egos fed'. Fave sites include ***badbehaviour.webjump.com*** and ***www.clubs.yahoo.com/clubs/violentheavenscrockettsclub***.

If you want to know more about The Crocketts (so you can bore your mates about how you knew them back when...) their official site is ***crocketts. webjump.com***.

PALMER PILOT

Even self-confessed computer novices are now finding the Internet a fun and accessible tool. Patsy Palmer got into it when her son took an interest: 'Charley's always talking about the Internet, and he's only eight.' She recommends a site called ***www.connectwomen.com*** 'for beginners just like me and my mum'. Patsy's taking part in an Internet chat, along with other Net-friendly celebrities such as Gail Porter and Holly Samos, to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Relief's World's Biggest Coffee Morning. For details, email the organisers at ***information_line@macmillan.org.uk***.

Bowie has set up his own ISP. You can sign on to it via his official site

DON'T LOOK NOW...

Cheap but certainly not cheerful, *The Blair Witch Project* is this year's movie sensation. And it all began here on the Internet

There's no projectile vomiting; no heads spinning 360 degrees; and no suggestive displays of demonic possession. Instead, *Blair Witch Project* offers shaky camera action and spartan black and white cinematography. But not since people ran screaming from the aisles during William Friedkin's *Exorcist* in 1973 have cinema audiences been this afraid.

With *Blair Witch's* UK release not due until 29 October, your best chance of a pre-screening frightener is via the Internet. This is where hype surrounding the film, which cost only $40,000 to make and eight days to shoot by joint writers and directors Ed Sanchez and Daniel Myrick, all began.

REAL OR MAKE-BELIEVE?

Months before its US premiere, *Blair Witch's* official site at **www.blairwitch.com** created a fact-fiction fusion on the scale of Orson Welles' *War of the Worlds*. Had, as the trailer footage on the site suggests, the three student filmmakers really died in the woods of Burkittsville, Maryland, while shooting a documentary on the curse of the Blair Witch?

Well, it was enough to convince many – around 21 million visitors refused to accept that the chilling tale wasn't real. Even the eminent Internet Movie Database (**www.imdb.com**) was 'briefly' fooled, admits its founder Col Needham, when it listed the three actors, Heather Donahue, Joshua Leonard and Michael Williams, as dead. 'An official source submitted their death dates to us,' he says.

While the more cynical UK audience might claim that they wouldn't be as gullible, the so-called 'recovered' 16mm footage and DAT audio won't so much give you the willies as freeze your soul. It's pyschological horror at its best. Log on, watch the trailer and we guarantee your desktop will have an audience in seconds.

'It works on a completely different level,' says Needham. 'It lets you imagine – and what you imagine is many times worse than what you can create.'

When Artisan films picked up *Blair Witch Project* at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival (after a midnight showing), they immediately saw the potential of the Net to create a cult around the film, and helped directors Sanchez and Myrick to develop their hoax site. 'We just kept building and building to create this whole folklore,' says Myrick. 'It became a complement to the film, a whole universe that the film is part of.'

Sanchez and Myrick first got the idea for the movie when they were at film school in 1993. Discussing how horror flicks just weren't scary enough, they came up with the idea of shooting a film in the style of a documentary; a horror movie that looked real. In 1996 they began work on their 'woods project', making good use of their lack of money by using hand-held cameras and unknown actors to achieve a raw, gritty and realistic effect. (Incidentally, 82 minutes of shaky camera motion has caused some people in audiences to be physically sick.)

DOES THE MOVIE CUT IT?

All the fuss would soon have died down if the film hadn't delivered the goods. However, critics across America are singing its praises and it earned a whopping $100 million within a month of opening. As we went to press, it hit $136million. Hopes are high that it signals a renaissance of horror – a genre which has firmly stuck in the teenage slasher-movie rut since the the late '70s.

Now, with maximum benefit gained from the reality-myth confusion (Burkittsville has been besieged by fans), the directors are unambiguous about whether the events are real or not. 'It's all fiction. Every little bit,' they insist. 'The Blair Witch mythology, the story of the students, the interviews from the Sci-fi special, everything. We have tried to create the film equivalent of a campfire tale – the kind that start out with "this really happened to my third cousin's best friend".'

Of course, you don't have to believe them.

Blair Witch Project opens on 29 October but make sure you catch the Net trailers at **www.blairwitch.com**, *with more footage at* **www.amazon.com**. *For further background information and user comments, check out* **www.imdb.com**

BLAIR WITCH

THE SCARIEST BLAIR WITCH SITES

OFFICIAL BLAIR WITCH SITE

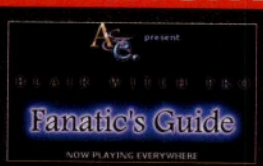
www.blairwitch.com

Where it all began. Read disturbing extracts from Heather's battered diary, watch grainy clips from the 16mm film found in the woods, and listen to audio from the recovered DAT tapes. This is an Internet phenomenon. Brilliant.

THE WITCHES OF BURKITTSVILLE

www.burkittsville.org

Can you handle the truth? Here you'll find the good people of Burkittsville, where *Blair Witch* was filmed, doing their level best to persuade the hordes of fruitcakes and conspiracy theorists of America that *Blair Witch Project* isn't real.



THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT FANATIC'S GUIDE

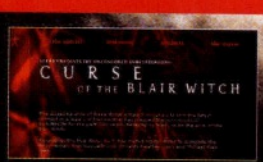
tbwp.freeservers.com

If you've got the Blair Witch bug and you've digested the entire contents of the official site, then this should be your next port-of-call. It's the homepage of the Blair Witch Web Ring, packed with info about both the film and the hoax.

HAXAN FILMS

www.haxan.com

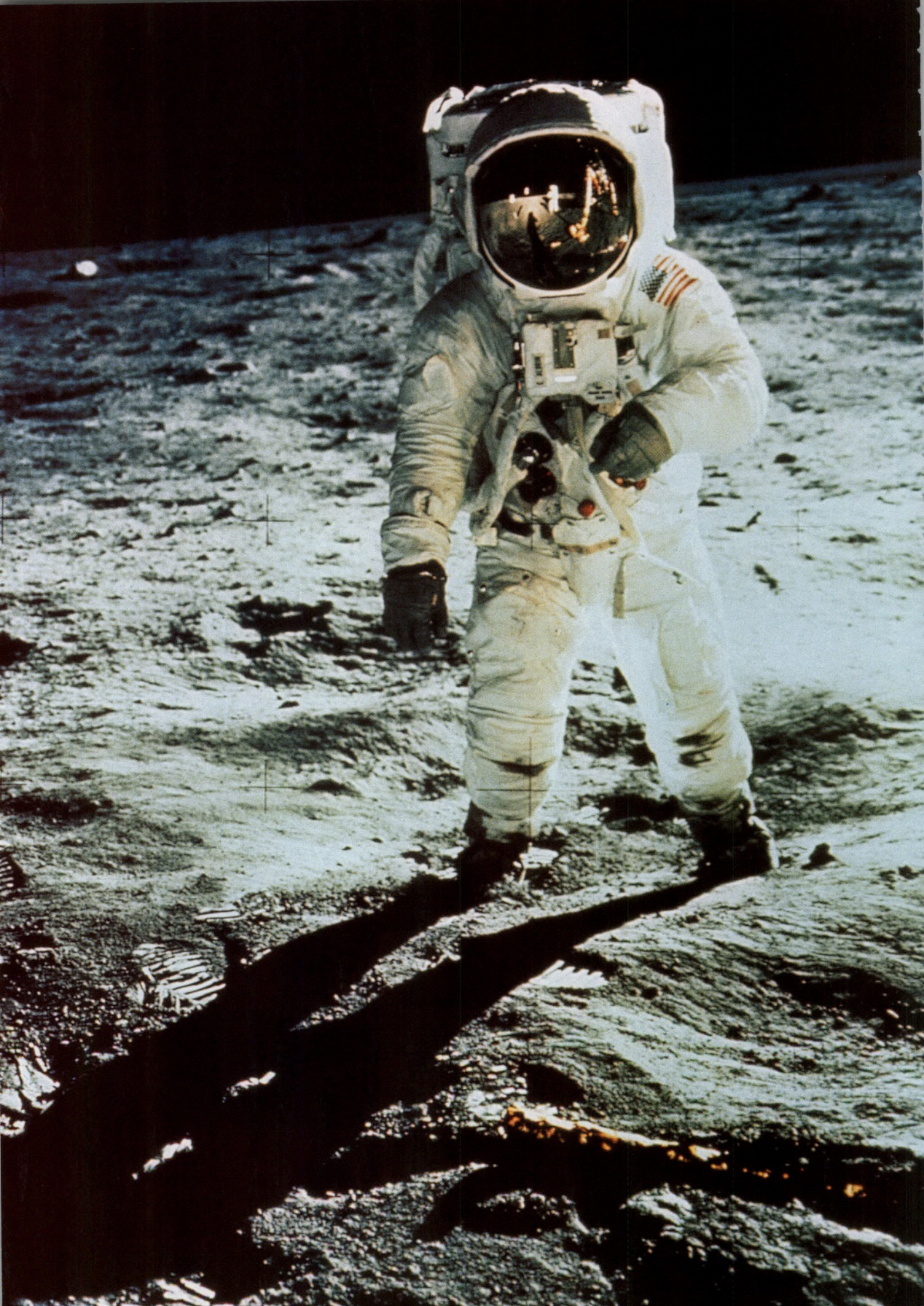
This, the home page of Haxan films (in other words, *Blair Witch Project* directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez), has been registering 1.5m hits a month, and contains a blow-by-blow diary of the making of the film. Essential reading for budding filmmakers.



CURSE OF THE BLAIR WITCH

www.scifi.com/blairwitch/h_thespecial.html

The site of the TV programme that fanned the flames by pretending to uncover evidence that the *Blair Witch Project* was a true story. So, is it true after all? Well, no. The Sci-fi Channel programme *Curse of the Blair Witch* was made by none other than Haxan.



The truth is out there

There's one major thing wrong with this image. And according to Net conspiracy theorists, it is just one example of a world of cover ups...

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW

Spending time on the Internet can be good for your health.

Find the best health sites at ukplus.co.uk

www.ukplus.co.uk

The Internet is bursting with great ideas to improve your health and fitness. But ask an ordinary search engine to seek out health and fitness websites and you'll end up with far more than is good for you. So if you want the sites that really do put you on top form, come to UKPlus. We've already done the hard work to make sure the selection you get is leaner and fitter than anything else on the Internet. Sites that cover everything from Tai Chi to herbal tea. Proving once again that UKPlus is definitely the best of the web without the rest of the web.

uk PLUS

The best of the web without the rest of the web

No longer are celebrities allowed to pop their clogs and move on to the next life in peace. There has to be a big discussion about how they died, who caused it and whether they did really die or simply faked it all in an attempt to get out of the limelight and work in peace as a waitress in an American diner.

Discussions like this make up a fair amount of conspiracy theories, and there are a host of other notions that events in the world around us are not as they seem. The conspiracy theorists believe the wool is being pulled well and truly over our eyes by the powers that be, and the Internet has provided an ideal home for these alternative explanations of events. While many of the theories are worth little more than the Web page they are displayed on, others are enough to make you wonder...

A SMALL STEP FOR MAN

20 July, 1969, Man on the moon. The world watched as Neil Armstrong stepped on to the surface of the moon and uttered those immortal words about small steps and giant leaps. Actually, Armstrong was still on terra firma and probably in a TV studio just down the road from Ground Control if you believe those who say the whole thing was faked.

'He was still on terra firma and probably in a TV studio'

The basis of the theory revolves around several anomalies in various pictures taken during the mission. Supposedly there was only one light source on the moon – the sun. Yet in some pictures, including our opening shot, the light falls at different angles, suggesting more than one light source. Mysterious objects appear in pictures that cannot be explained. Yet the most bizarre is a picture of one of the astronauts on the moon: there is a reflection in his visor showing TWO men. So that's two men in the reflection plus the man wearing the visor, but there were only two men on the moon in total.

There's an analysis of some of the famous lunar landing photographs at ***www.neosoft.com/~cshramek/nasafake.htm*** and ***www.angelfire.com/ut/aylett/eth69.html*** is a comprehensive look at all the different theories and arguments surrounding the moon landing. This site seeks merely to raise questions rather than come up with bizarre reasons for the unexplained, but if that's what you want take a look at ***www.eisa.net.au/~cheza/moon.html*** for the most eccentric notions on what really happened.

It begins with an accusation that man didn't have the necessary technology to get to the moon. Later it transpires that Russia and America developed their space technology together, and the moon landings were faked because the two were building a base on the moon as a staging post for an attempt on Mars. One minute we haven't got the technology to get to the moon, the next we are going to Mars; that one might need a bit of a rethink.

THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR THEORISTS

Accessing the info

EXECUTIVE REVIEW
www.larouchepub.com
If you want paranoia then Lyndon LaRouche is your man. A couple of the snippets on here includes a debate on whether World War III is coming and if Tony Blair is planning to bomb Buckingham Palace. Enough said.

DISINFORMATION
www.disinfo.com
A site for all those with a cynical state of mind, with all sorts of entertaining articles on various things that challenge the way we look at the world. A wonderful section on conspiracies includes a hell of a lot of information on laundering money.

4 CONSPIRACY THEORIES
www.4conspiracytheories.com
The best place to begin if you want to start investigating the various theories doing the rounds on the Net. No specific content, but there are enough links to set you off on a voyage of conspiracy discovery.

DYING TO KNOW

22 November, 1963, JFK assassinated. If you've ever had the patience to sit through Oliver Stone's epic *JFK* you'll be aware that there are enough versions of what may have happened when JFK was assassinated to fill a few hundred Web sites. A visit to ***users.southeast.net/~cheryl/jfk.html*** will give you enough links to keep you investigating them all for months. It's well over 30 years since JFK was shot and time has obviously not diluted that controversy, so it's no surprise to find the wired community up in arms about the more recent death of Diana.

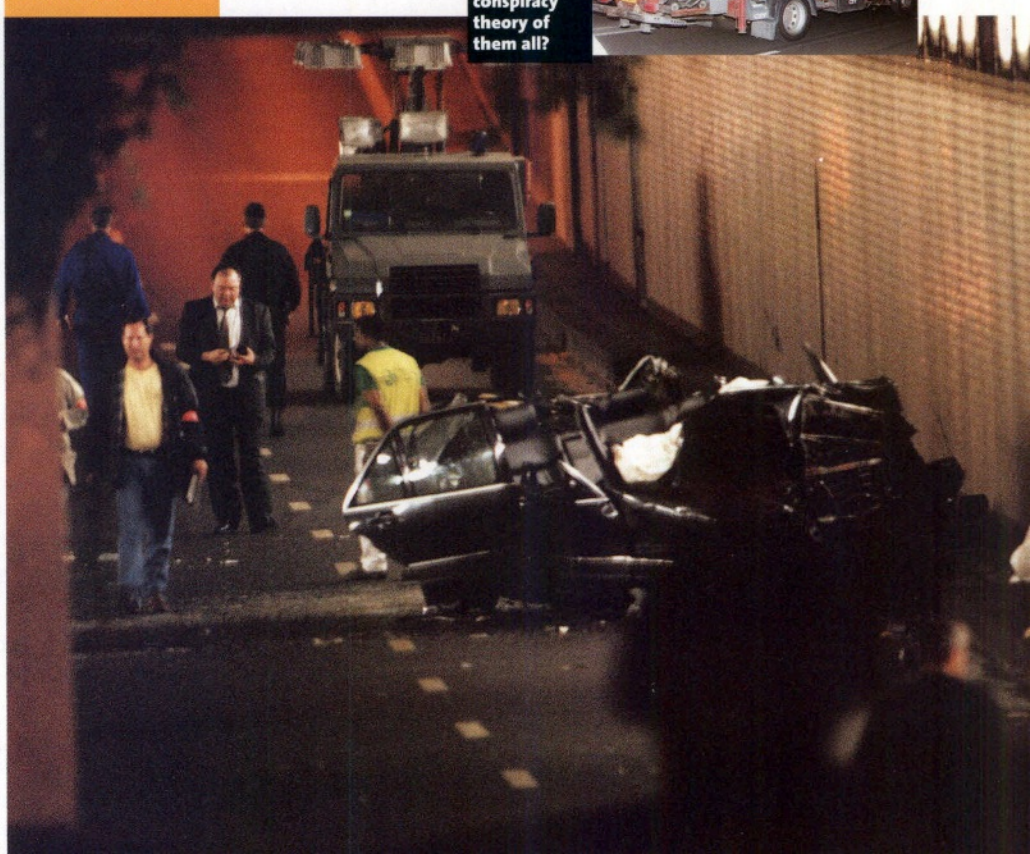
The dubious nature of the accident is summed up at ***www.newworldnetwork.com/diana.htm*** which should make even the diehard sceptic think twice about the circumstances surrounding her death. Have you ever wondered why we have never seen any photographs of the crash, why the bodyguard who survived the crash has never spoken about it, or how a supposedly drunken chauffeur managed to drive at 120mph for so long before crashing?

It's a shame that the site is ruined by a set of ridiculously far-fetched theories, including one that Diana was killed in the hotel then loaded into a pre-crushed car before it was positioned in the tunnel.

Some of the more scary ideas are put forward at the Princess Diana Murder Conspiracy page (***www.mcn.org/b/poisonfrog/diana/***). It includes allegations that MI6 carried out an assassination of the former Princess of Wales and also a bizarre investigation

'It should make even the die-hard sceptic think twice'

Di and Dodi's death: the biggest Net conspiracy theory of them all?



DON'T JUST E-MAIL, SEE MAIL

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A world first, the Sharp digital VN-EZ1 Internet ViewCam sends moving pictures over the net in a totally new format.

No complicated procedures, no massive files that take forever to transmit and download.

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Use Sharp Internet ViewCam to shoot up to 60 mins of video plus audio on to 32MB Smart Media™ card

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PixLab software included to help prepare your moving picture files

Send video as e-mail attachment, MPEG-4 drastically reducing file size

Video can be quickly and easily viewed on Windows® Media Player

WIDE SCREEN TV

LCD VIDEO PROJECTOR

DVD

VCR

VIEWCAM

PERSONAL MINIDISC

MINIDISC SYSTEM

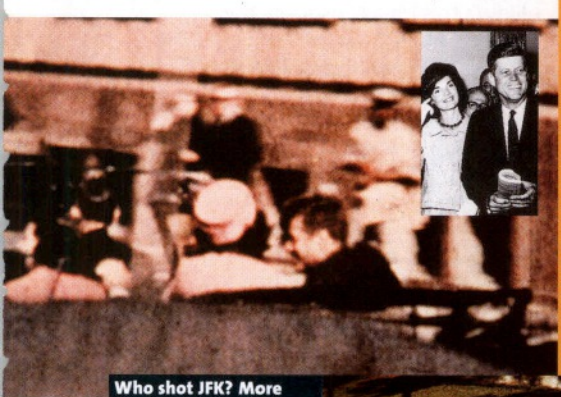
SHARP digital

into the astrological influences that may have contributed to her death. If it's all getting too heavy for you, try the *Top Ten Paranoid Conspiracy Theories* at ***members.tripod.com/~FahimF*** with outlandish classics such as: 'Charles did it! Because he owns all the merchandising rights to Diana's image'.

Another recent tragic death to spark worldwide mourning was the apparent suicide of rock legend and Nirvana frontman, Kurt Cobain. Five years after his death there is still heated debate about whether the master of grunge did indeed commit suicide. This way of thinking is preached by private investigator Tom Grant.

He is convinced that Cobain was murdered and you can see a summary of his thoughts at ***thc.meccanet.com/cobain.html***. He is adamant that Cobain was in fear for his life. Grant also claims that he was about to divorce Courtney Love. He also declares that Cobain did not barricade himself inside the room as was claimed and the suicide note is really a note announcing his retirement from music: 'There's nothing in this note that mentions suicide,' Grant has said. 'It was obviously written to his fans, saying he was retiring.'

Grant is thankful that the Internet was the one place he could continue to publicise his investigation and his site at ***www.thegrid.net/tomgrant/index.html*** is well worth a visit. For a more forthright view take a trip to ***www.tiac.net/users/tobya/*** where Andrew Amirault publishes the fruits of over three and a half years labour investigating the Cobain case.



Who shot JFK? More than 30 years on, the theories still abound

UP FOR THE CRACK

1980s, contra rebels, Nicaragua.

The mystique surrounding the Central Intelligence Agency makes it almost inevitable that it appears in several conspiracy theories. There is a lot of supposed evidence to support the theory that the CIA was responsible for the mass introduction of crack cocaine into America with the money used to finance the contra rebels in Nicaragua in the early 1980s. The background is available at ***www.mcs.net/~rwor/s/cia.htm*** and there's more information and further allegations of CIA misdeeds at ***www.radio4all.org /crackcia/articles.html***.

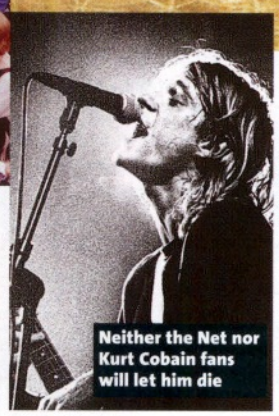
THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR THEORISTS

Accessing the info

CONSPIRACY CENTRAL
www.conspiracycentral.com
Really a marketing tool for a book about all these bizarre ideas, and it's worth keeping an eye on. It offers expert views on the world of conspiracy theories.

THE CONSPIRACY PAGE
www.angelfire.com/nj/kristinashomepage/conspiracy.html
If you want to find out why the US military apparently wants to own the weather by the year 2025 or find out if you are being stalked, then this is the place to go.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES
homepage.oanet.com/blanchette/
'It's here to completely waste your time and inform you of all the lack of information which is so kindly displayed here for nobody and you. So please feel free to do nothing, say nothing and completely waste your time.' They say it far better than us.



Neither the Net nor Kurt Cobain fans will let him die

It seems that nothing can be taken too seriously online, though, as ***speech.csun.edu/ben/news/cia/961223.topten.html*** offers the top 10 reasons to believe the CIA when it says it never sold crack to support the contras. It includes: 'Director was at times drunk and incoherent; may have mumbled, "Get cracking on this contra thing"'.

While the introduction of harmful drugs to the public is one thing, preventing lifesaving drugs from finding their way to seriously ill people is arguably even worse. There are several sites claiming that the research into a cure for cancer has been deliberately hindered. Barry Lynes is the main protagonist, claiming there has been an: 'organised suppression of cancer therapies which actually work'. Read more at ***www.altcancer.com/lysis.htm***. Unfortunately there's not a great deal of information on the site, but if your curiosity is aroused there are enough books available to satisfy it.

'Sites claim that research into a cure for cancer is hindered'

While no one has come to the same conclusion about that other killer in our midst, serious questions are being asked about the 'facts' on AIDS. It is generally accepted that AIDS is a condition that originated in monkeys in Africa and is caused by HIV, which is transmitted through sexual intercourse or through infected blood. It may come as a surprise to know that there are people out there, many of whom are respected doctors, who have a different opinion. The alternatives are that the disease could be man-made, that it is part of a conspiracy to get rid of 'less desirable' elements of society, and that it is in no way linked to HIV.

And, when two Nobel Prize winners for Chemistry question the accepted belief that HIV and AIDS are connected, it shouldn't be taken lightly. Dr Walter Gilbert, winner of the Nobel Prize in 1980, says: 'I would not be surprised if there was another cause of AIDS and even that HIV is not involved.' Dr Kary Mullis, who won the award in 1983, says: 'If there is evidence that HIV causes AIDS, there should be scientific documents which either singly or collectively demonstrate that fact, at least with a high probability. There is no such document.' The Rethinking AIDS site at ***www.virusmyth.com/aids/*** offers quotes from a number of people and offers masses of

THE WEB VS NEWSGROUPS

Paranoid? You soon will be...

If you want to keep up with conspiracy theories as they develop then the Web, wonderful as it is, comes a poor second to newsgroups. The more paranoid in this world like nothing better than to go online and post their perceptions of the latest news. Keep your theory knowledge on the boil with the help of the following:

- ***alt.conspiracy***
- ***alt.conspiracy.abe-lincoln***
- ***alt.conspiracy.british-telecom***
- ***alt.conspiracy.im.taking.over.the.world***
- ***alt.conspiracy.retards***
- ***alt.conspiracy.spy***
- ***alt.conspiracy.yak.worshippers***
- ***alt.guinea.pig.conspiracy***
- ***alt.liberty-vs.conspiracy***

THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR THEORISTS

Accessing the info

CONSPIRE.COM

www.conspire.com

The best site around for discovering what's going on in the shady world of CTs. Covers all of the best and a fair few of the rest in detail, and gives a great introduction to Diana, JFK, and more.

REAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

www.webcom.com/~lpease

This is an excellent site that exists 'because we are not being told the truth about our history'. One of the easiest resources to use and it covers the more famous unsettled debates that continue to cause controversy.

'If you travel on the subway in New York, be afraid...'

Read crack CIA stories and AIDS virus (right) shockers

other information on AIDS. It goes on to question the link between HIV and AIDS and whether it really is sexually transmitted.

That in itself should be enough to scare you, but consider the implications if AIDS was discovered to be a man-made disease as opposed to a work of nature. That's the main focus of the argument at ***www.sonic.net/~doretk/ArchiveARCHIVE/Aids/Aids.html***. Among other issues, it poses the question of whether the disease is the result of a biological experiment to rid the world of 'homosexuals, blacks and other undesirables'.

Although if conspiracy theorists continue with that line, it's surely only a matter of time until somebody blames condom manufacturers for creating the whole thing just to get us to buy more of their products.

MYSTERIOUS EXPLOSION

17 July, 1996, plane explosion.

There is little debate over what caused the tragic deaths of every single passenger on TWA flight 800 on that summer's day. The plane mysteriously exploded just off the American coast, killing all 230 people on board. But there has never been sufficient official explanation of what happened to satisfy many people who suspect a cover-up was in operation. What there has been are denials of various theories, ranging from the suggestion that the disaster was the result of a terrorist attack, to the far more serious and far more popular notion that the plane was shot down by a missile. You can find links to the main sites from ***http://www.mcn.org/b/poisonfrog/twa/***.

That's not the only thing our cousins in the USA have to worry about. Apart from having the funkiest intro page on the entire Web, the Disk-O site also holds information on one of the darkest secrets we came across.

If you ever have the opportunity to travel on the subway in New York, be very afraid. You might not make it back to the surface. Disk-O claims the number of people going into the subway does not add up to the number of people *leaving* the subway. Leading the possible causes of Subway Abduction are Alien Abductions, interference from the legendary mole people of NYC, or several instances of Spontaneous Excretory Combustion. Grab yourself a large pinch of salt before you read ***www.disk-o.com***.

A pinch of salt might be needed for that, but with much of the information you'll find on these sites you might be pinching yourself. Are we really oblivious to the authorities misleading us on major issues or is it a load of paranoid claptrap? Maybe we'll never know, but it's worth remembering that, as Kurt Cobain sang before he did or didn't commit suicide: *Just because you're paranoid, don't mean they're not after you.*

TWA flight 800? Is there a cover-up?

CONSIDER THIS...

How's this for a conspiracy theory?

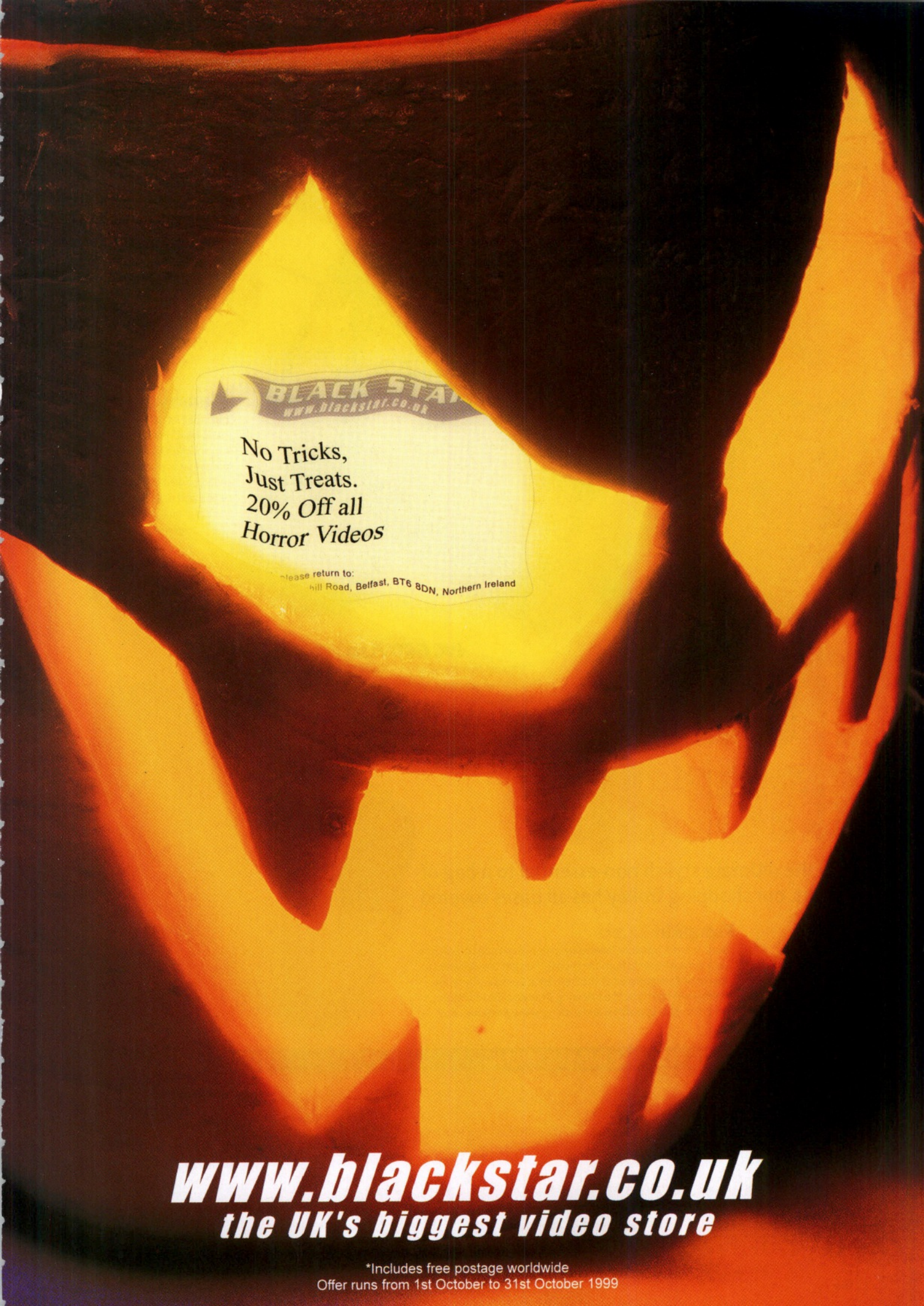
Do you think there was some amazing, divine intervention at work regarding Abraham Lincoln and John F Kennedy, or was it just a simple matter of coincidence? You figure it out for yourself...

Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.
John F Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.
Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860.
John F Kennedy was elected president in 1960.
The names Lincoln and Kennedy each contain seven letters.
Both were particularly concerned with civil rights.
Both wives lost children while living in the White House.
Both presidents were shot on a Friday.
Both were shot in the head.
Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.
Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.
Both were assassinated by Southerners.
Both were succeeded by Southerners.
Both successors were named Johnson.
Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Lincoln, was born in 1808.
Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, was born in 1908.
John Wilkes Booth, who assassinated Lincoln, was born in 1839.
Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated Kennedy, was born in 1939.
Both assassins were known by their three names.
Both names comprise 15 letters.
Booth and Oswald were both assassinated before their trials.

AND, FINALLY...

A week before Lincoln was shot he was in Monroe, Maryland.
A week before Kennedy was shot he was into Marilyn Monroe.

POPPERFOTO, SYGMA, RETNA, SIPA PRESS, SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY, HULTON GETTY, REX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Just Treats.
20% Off all
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please return to:
hill Road, Belfast, BT6 8DN, Northern Ireland
www.blackstar.co.uk
the UK's biggest video store
*Includes free postage worldwide
Offer runs from 1st October to 31st October 1999

Jubilee Fireworks £40

Follow the online firework code: explosives should not be sent by post so if a firework shop uses letter boxes, don't go near them. Jubilee Fireworks uses the right and proper couriers and price includes delivery. This is its mega Emperor Party Box. ***www.jubilee-fireworks.ltd.uk***

Sausages £11.25

Could the Net deliver on the fresh meat front? Edwards of Conwy can and did. Our order for 5lb of sausages was placed at 11am and landed, packed in polystyrene and ice, the next day (with £8 delivery, order in bulk). ***www.edwardsofconwy.co.uk***

Retail therapy

From the ultimate stylish non-essential to a bag of bangers, our shopping trolley has all bases covered

JVC GRDVL20 £549.99

Inspired to make your own *Blair Witch* blockbuster? This is what you need. Unbeatable, surprisingly, claims to offer unbeatable prices – test them. Delivery costs £6.99 and allow 28 days. ***www.unbeatable.co.uk***

Pumpkin £4.20

Want to enter into the Hallowe'en spirit but can't be bothered to lug a pumpkin home from the shops? Then get one delivered to your door. Orders placed at the Fresh Food Company by 12pm Monday will reach you the following Thursday. The minimum order is £20, plus £5 postage and packing. ***www.freshfood.co.uk***

THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

Keep to our simple guidelines, and there's no reason why online shopping should end in a puddle of tears

■ CHECK THE SITE IS SECURE A small padlock will appear in the bottom left of your browser to show that you can safely send credit card details through the site. Your Web browser will also tell you whether a site is secure or not when you enter it.

■ SHOP WITH BRAND-NAME COMPANIES As with any shopping, you're better off with a company you've actually heard of.

■ CHECK DELIVERY TIMES AND CHARGES Companies should tell you the delivery charge if there is one on their site. If you live in the Highlands and Islands or Ireland, you may find that free delivery does not apply.

■ NEVER SEND ANYTHING BY EMAIL If a site asks for card details by email, don't oblige. It's far, far easier for emails to be intercepted.

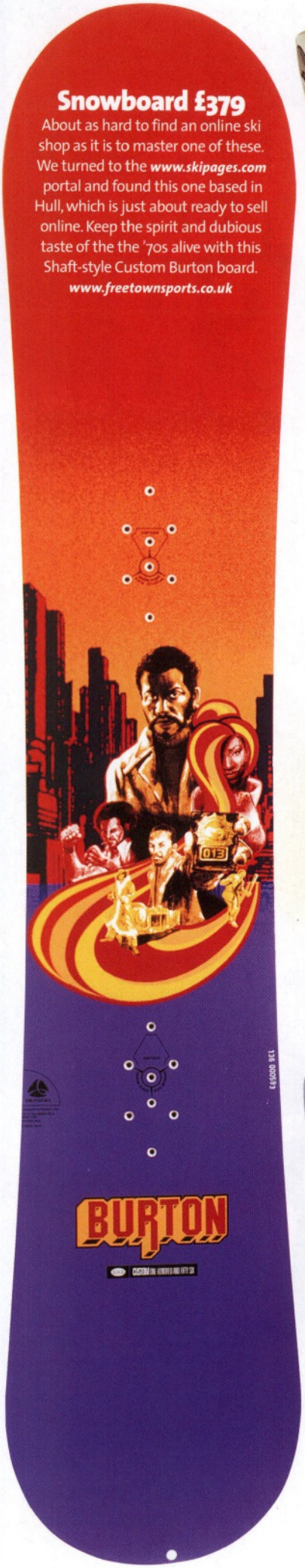
■ PRINT THE CONTRACT This is the only permanent record of your purchase, so make sure you keep it, along with your order number and other details. Don't forget: if it's a UK site, you have the same consumer rights as you do in the High Street.

■ IF IT GOES WRONG, DON'T WORRY Contrary to scare stories, online shopping is safer and very often cheaper than traditional methods – and it's in the online store's interest to sort any problems out quickly.

PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK WRIGHT

Snowboard £379

About as hard to find an online ski shop as it is to master one of these. We turned to the ***www.skipages.com*** portal and found this one based in Hull, which is just about ready to sell online. Keep the spirit and dubious taste of the the '70s alive with this Shaft-style Custom Burton board.
www.freetownsports.co.uk



Philips Nino 300 £245.50

Well, you need something on which to do your digital shopping list. So do it in style with one of these. Order from Digital Choice before 3pm weekdays and it'll be with you within two working days. Even better, the price includes courier delivery.
www.digitalchoice.co.uk

Phone seat £8

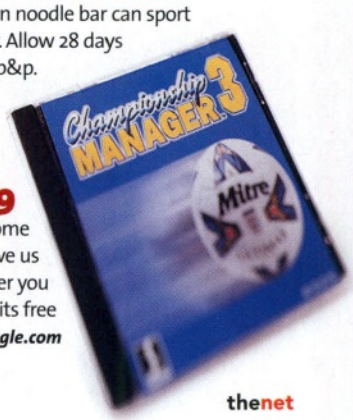
No longer is it enough to have a mobile phone, now you need a chair to put it in. This is probably the least useful article from Inhabit, a great site for those stylish interior goods. Delivery is free and allow 14 days.
www.inhabit.co.uk

Fat Face sweat shirt £25.11

Stay cosy and warm during the imminent British winter with this funky sweat. It's a bargain – the original sale price was £33. Add £2.98 p&p; delivery is in two days. ***www.fatface.co.uk***

Wagamama T-shirt £20

Fans of the well-known noodle bar can sport the team colours now. Allow 28 days for delivery and £1.50 p&p.
www.wagamama.com



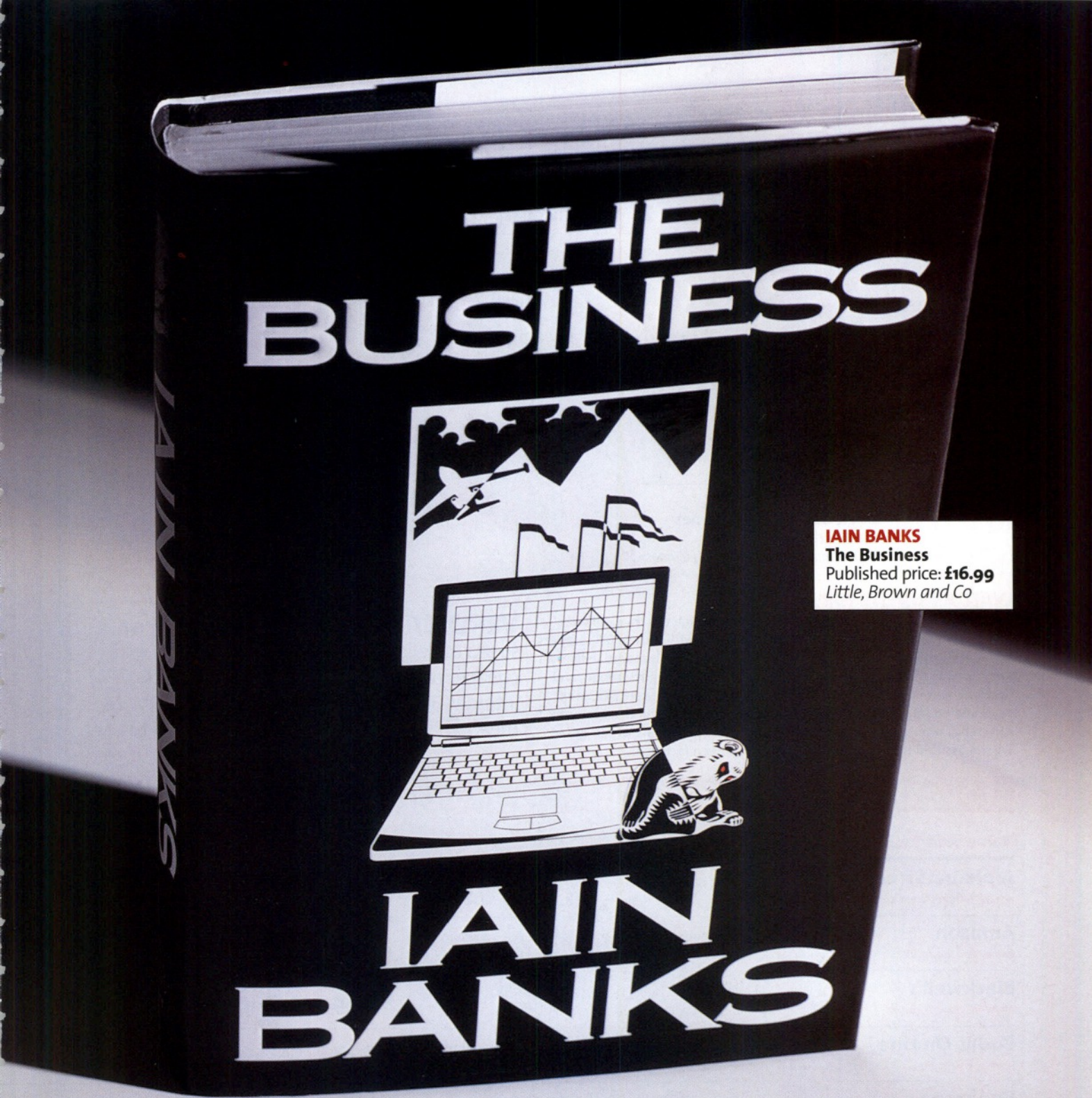
Championship Manager 3 £20.39

The England job will be available again one day – sooner or later – so get some practice in. We tried out the new Jungle.com but our corporate firewall gave us some problems placing the order. We talked to Jungle direct – remember you should always be able to talk to an online store by phone – and it fulfilled its free three to five-day delivery promise. ***www.jungle.com***

These books both cost £8...

...but if you buy on the High Street you'll only be getting half the story. Find out how the Web puts the fun back into books...

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY. PICTURES: NICK WRIGHT



IAIN BANKS
The Business
Published price: **£16.99**
Little, Brown and Co

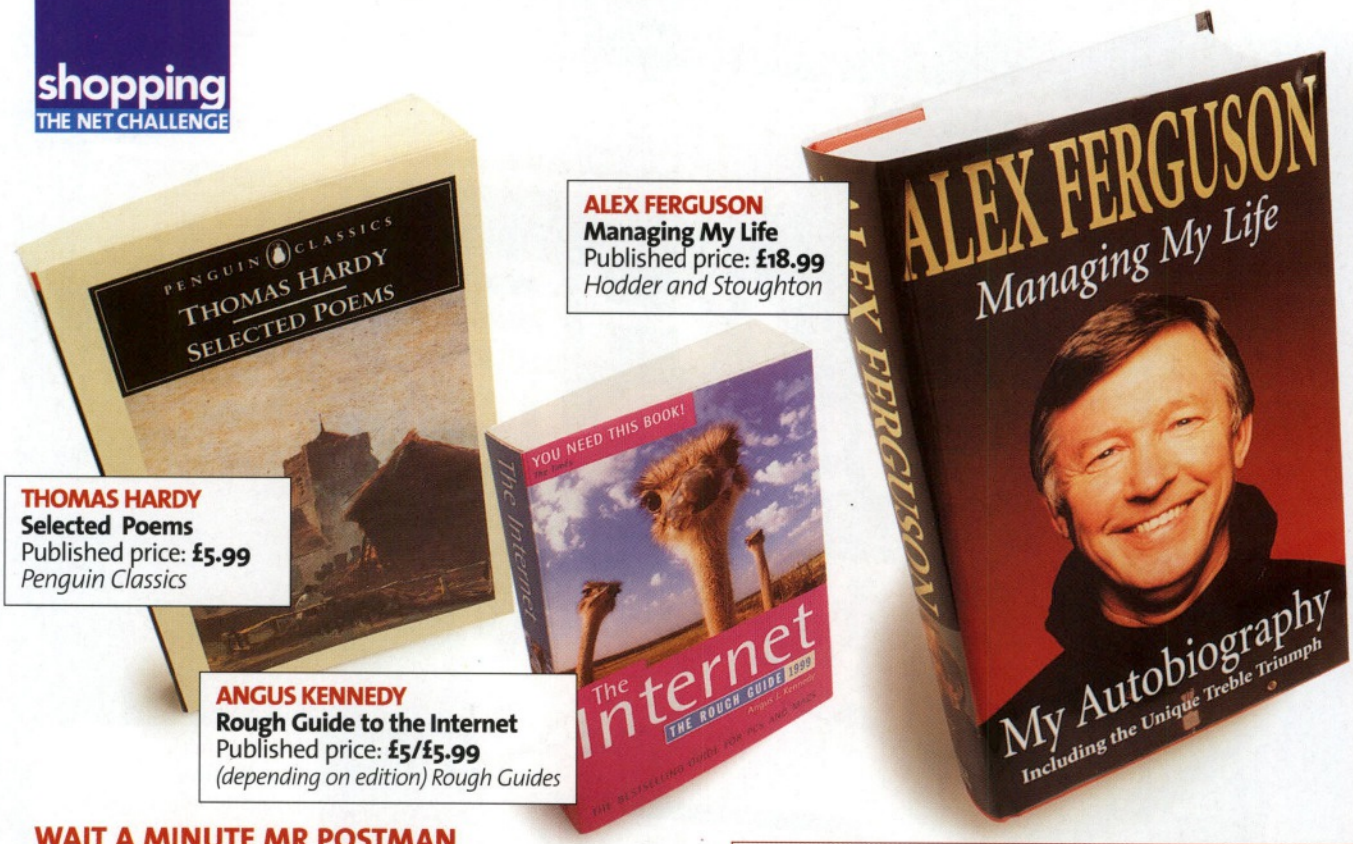
BUYING BOOKS ONLINE You can make huge savings by purchasing over the Net. But which are the best sites for the hottest bargains?

PICTURE THE SCENE: you're cold, you're weary, you're weak. You've been trekking up and down the hills and dales of Woking shopping centre in a desperate attempt to find that oh-*so*-elusive, reasonably-priced copy of *The History of the Chipping Sodbury Branch Line*. Exhausted, you arrive home, flop into your comfy chair and sigh at the prospect of future hours continuing the search for what amounts – quite frankly – to your version of the Bible.

But rest assured: it needn't be like this ever again. For take note: within minutes you can have virtually any book that has ever been through printer's hands ordered and winging its merry way to your letter box. And it's all thanks to the Net.

The one online book retailer that you can't fail to have heard of is the mighty Amazon: a huge collection of books, excellent prices and some clever marketing has meant that it's become one of the most successful e-commerce sites ever. With all that publicity, you'd be forgiven for assuming that there are no alternatives. But there are. Online book selling is a hugely competitive industry. As such, prices of books are ridiculously low: on many sites expect to pay half the High Street price for bestsellers. But services offered by the thousands of online bookstores vary tremendously. While smaller shops generally can't match the giants price-wise, they very often provide that personal touch that can be a godsend if you're after an unusual text. Some sites will let you read extracts online, others offer discounts if you become a regular customer. Most will save you money, and every one will save you time and shoe-leather.

So in an attempt to dig through all the hype and get to the books themselves, we ordered the same four best-sellers from a number of sites to find out exactly what they could offer us, the customer. The result of our long and arduous quest is over the page...



ALEX FERGUSON
Managing My Life
Published price: **£18.99**
Hodder and Stoughton

THOMAS HARDY
Selected Poems
Published price: **£5.99**
Penguin Classics

ANGUS KENNEDY
Rough Guide to the Internet
Published price: **£5/£5.99**
(depending on edition) Rough Guides

WAIT A MINUTE MR POSTMAN

Our books took a surprisingly varied amount of time to arrive. All were ordered by the postage option we were presented with, except BOL, Heffers and Blackwell's where we had a choice – we opted for Standard delivery. Amazon was the quickest – we ordered on a Wednesday afternoon, and the book was with us first thing next morning. Longest were BOL at 19 days, and Country Bookstore and Heffers at 25 days. All three apparently suffered computer problems, which delayed the processing of our order. We are assured that the problems have now been rectified.

VERDICT You can't beat Amazon for their speed of delivery, but AlphabetStreet was cheaper overall for our four selected books. Internet Bookshop, BOL and Country Bookstore, meanwhile, were well-designed and easy-to-use.

HOW THE STORES COMPARE

Name/Address	Services Offered	IAIN BANKS	ALEX FERGUSON	THOMAS HARDY	ANGUS KENNEDY
AlphabetStreet www.alphabetstreet.co.uk	Book arm of Streets Online. Vast amount of books, Ezy-Click buying and a 'match-your-mood' category selector	£8.49	£8.99	£5.09	£2.50
Amazon www.amazon.co.uk	The Big One. Whopping catalogue with an excellent search facility, competitions and a recommendation service	£8.33	£9.31	£4.79	£4.79
Blackwell's www.blackwells.co.uk	Online version of the High Street chain. Monthly book magazine, alerting service and rare books	£16.99	£18.99	£5.99	£4.00
Books On Line www.uk.bol.com	Huge European online store. An excellent search facility and the chance to create your own 'bookshelf'	£8.50	£9.50	£5.39	£4.79
Bookzone www.bookzone.co.uk	Offers a search facility, but no catalogue. Large selection of CDs, plus videos, books and software	£16.99	£18.99	£4.27	£4.87
Country Bookstore www.countrybookstore.co.uk	Extensive online version of Derbyshire bookseller. Out-of-print and price-match facilities	£8.49	£8.99	£5.69	£5.39
Heffers www.heffers.co.uk	Web home of the Cambridge shop. Varied selection, including academic titles. Out-of-print and online experts	£16.99	£15.99	£5.99	£5.99
Internet Bookshop www.bookshop.co.uk	Book branch of WH Smith. Clean and very easy-to-use with 1.4 million UK and US books	£8.50	£9.50	£4.79	£4.98
John Smith www.johnsmith.co.uk	Online home of the Scottish chain. Out-of-print search, and a choice of five languages, including gaelic	£16.99	£18.99	£5.99	£5.99
James Thin www.jamesthin.co.uk	Wide range of stock, especially Scottish and antiquarian. Online magazine and staff-recommended titles	£12.99	£12.99	£5.99	£5.99
Waterstones www.waterstones.co.uk	Nice-looking site from the High Street store. Extensive range, plus out-of-print and personal library facilities	£8.50	£15.19	£5.99	£5.99

All prices and details correct at time of going to press

Buying Rare books

Book buying on the Net isn't just about cheap copies of the latest bestseller. If the musty smell of old, out-of-print books is more your cup of tea, you'll be delighted to learn that there are plenty of sites that will satisfy your cravings. Hundreds – nay, thousands – of sites specialise in rare and out-of-print titles. You might find that copy of *Fly Fishing* by J R Hartley after all.

Some bigger sites will keep you waiting weeks for books that aren't in stock. But shop around at specialised sites and your book will be in your grubby little paws in a flash. The best way to start looking for a copy of your chosen tome is to use a search engine dedicated to the job. Bibliofind (***www.bibliofind.com***) and Antiqbook (***www.antiqbook.com***) are two. Type in as much as you know about the book, and the engine will list the shops on its register that stock a copy, and the price. The list is vast – Bibliofind managed to find us a rare first edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* at our first attempt. You can order directly from the search engine, or the shop's site. The engines include shops worldwide, so fear not: even if your book was published in Venezula, you still might be in luck.

If that fails, use a major search engine to find a list of booksellers that specialise in rare or out-of-print texts – Yahoo, for instance. Heraldry Today (***www.heraldrytoday.co.uk***), for example, is excellent for rare books on genealogy. Failing that, register your interest on a site such as Book Lovers (***www.book lovers.co.uk***). They distribute your request to their extensive list of contacts – primarily booksellers – who will email you if they know the whereabouts of a copy, or someone who might be able to help you locate a copy of the precious work.

Special Offers	Post & Packing prices and delivery times to the UK*	Method of payment	Customer Service No	Ease of use	Number of titles	Days our book took	Overall
Discounts on many titles	1st Class – 1-2 days £1.95+50p per item	Credit cards	01293 450 100	★★★★	Over 1m	6 days	★★★★★
Discounts on many titles	1st Class – 1 working day £1.95+50p per item	Credit cards, cheques	0800 279 6620	★★★★★	1.5m	1 day	★★★★★
Sales on various titles	Standard 1-3 days – Free Express – Next day £5.50	Credit cards	01865 261 379	★★★★	1.5m	11 days	★★★★
Discounts on many titles	Standard – 2-3 working days £1.95 Express 1 working day £2.95	Credit cards, cheque	0870 607 0205	★★★★★	3m	**19 days	★★★★
Discounts on selected titles	1st Class– price depends on size of package	Credit cards, cheque	01484 400 553	★★★★	1m	5 days	★★★★
Many titles discounted	Royal Mail – 1-2 working days – Free	Credit cards	01629 813 444	★★★★★	Over 1m	**25 days	★★★
On selected titles	1st Class to 1kg – 1 day – £2.75 2nd Class to 1kg – 3-4 days – £1.55	Credit cards, account	01223 568 568	★★★★	1.9m	**25 days	★★★
Savings on many titles	2-3 days – 15 percent of full book price – min £1.95, max £6	Credit cards	01865 771 772	★★★★★	1.4m	7 days	★★★★★
On selected books. 100th order free	Depends on weight of books – min £1.15, max £4	Credit cards	0141 221 7472	★★★	1m	7 days	★★★★
Discount on selected titles	Depends on weight of package	Credit cards, cheques	0131 556 6743	★★★★	1m	6 days	★★★★
Discount on selected titles	Royal Mail 1st class – 2-3 working days, £1.95 + 50p per item	Credit cards	01225 448 595	★★★★	1.3m	14 days	★★★★

**Not including handling time – depends on book, **order suffered computer problems*

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- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

Magic Standard £155pa

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- 10 POP Email boxes
- Multiple Email routing
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- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

Magic from the Heart £195pa

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- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees
£10 from this package is contributed to charitable causes
Details: http://www.magic-moments.com/charity/

Magic Enterprise £255pa

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- Unlimited Email addresses
- 20 POP Email boxes
- Multiple Email routing
- Unlimited Email autoresponders
- SSL secure server
- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

No hidden set up charges!

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Filemaker Pro database hosting	from £200 pa
SSL secure server*	from £35 pa
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*Set up charges apply

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MPfree

Free music to go. That's the teasing promise of the new wave of baby MP3 players, letting you take sounds from the Net on the road

JUST IMAGINE NEVER HAVING to deal with snooty record shop assistants again. Never again will you be made to feel out-of-touch while trying to buy a track that's regarded as yesterday's thing because it's been out of the charts for a week. Thanks to MP3 you can wave this all goodbye. And it gets better. You won't ever have to pay for bonus filler tracks when all you want is the version Zoë Ball plays on the Breakfast Show. You won't even have to leave the comfort of your own home to buy music. And, unlike other online purchases, you won't have to wait days or weeks for the product to arrive; just the time it takes to download (which, for a 4Mb track through a 56K modem, should take 15mins – and so cost 15p, assuming you're bright enough to download over the weekend). Yes, the cassette, MiniDisc and perhaps even the CD are dead. Long live MP3, the format that's shaking the music world to its core.

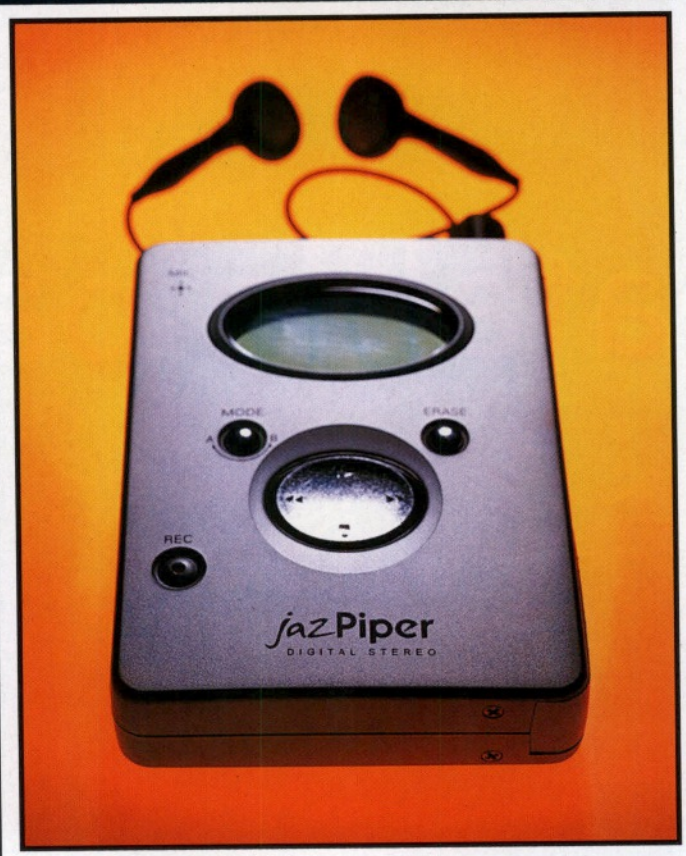
MP3 SUPER TEST ☆ PHILEX MPRESS3 £150 ☆ JAZPIPER MP3 £140 ☆ DIAMOND RIO 500 SM £229

PHILEX MPRESS3 £150

RESPLENDENT IN BLUE AND SILVER, the MPress3 looks like an Apple iMac accessory – perhaps predictable given its maker's pedigree in producing spectacular remote controls and clever telephone gadgets, but ironic as the software supplied is PC only. And like an iMac, the accent's on ease of use; the display is large, the controls easy to locate, and there's a built-in microphone allowing it to double as a 99-message Dictaphone. Even the MPress3 Files Manager is fantastic to use. But playing music is what really counts, and the MPress3 manages that with ease. Thanks in part to the cool backloop headphones supplied, the player conjures a sound that, within the restrictions of a portable format, has real clout and drive. It even has a range of pre-set tone levels, allowing you to suit the sound to your taste. For anything from rock and pop to classical pieces, the Philex is never less than impressive.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★★★
CAPACITY 32Mb with card expansion slot
PROS Those cool headphones
CONS Nothing, really
www.philex.com



JAZPIPER MP3 £140

WITH ITS LARGE OVAL DISPLAY AND intuitively laid-out controls set into a silver casing, the jazPiper is both handsome and fantastically light. Getting up and running is simple, and once the easy-to-use jazPiper Desk software is installed on your PC, you'll be dragging and dropping on to the player in no time. One added bonus is the Jet Audio MP3 ripper included in the software, allowing you to make your own MP3 files from CD and play them back on your portable. Sonically, the jazPiper is impressive and loud: perfect for busy streets. Its clean, clear sound makes it ideal for rock and pop, and a decent bass performance kicks with dance music. It also has a handy built-in mic, perfect for use as a Dictaphone, and playback here is easy to follow, too. The jazPiper may not be the best sounding MP3 player around in the purist hi-fi terms, but it can rock – and its stylish good looks will stop you looking like a nerd on the street.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★★
CAPACITY 32Mb with card expansion slot
PROS Jet Audio production suite
CONS The Kenny G associations
www.jazpiper.nl

BEST BUY!

DIAMOND RIO 500 SM £229

AFTER PRODUCING the first UK MP3 player, it's fitting that Diamond has released a second-generation model while others are still launching their first. The slinky 500 looks a world apart from the original: far more hi-fi than hi-tech. And it now has enough memory to store an hour of near CD-quality music. The bundled Audio Manager suite is the most impressive of any player tested, and comes supplied with the excellent Fraunhofer MP3 encoding package, allowing you to make your own MP3s. There's also a built-in digital rights management system that will hopefully cut down on the use of illegal MP3s. And to top it all, it sounds as good as its specification suggests: with a decent MP3 file, it's hard to distinguish its sound from MiniDisc. It's full and refined, with a musical rather than technical nature. The PMP500 isn't the cheapest player, but it's worth every penny.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★★★
CAPACITY 32Mb with card expansion slot
PROS All that extra memory
CONS Most expensive yet
www.diamondmm.com

BETTER THAN SEX

MP3 is fast becoming the biggest thing on the Internet since sex. There are tens of thousands of MP3 sites on the Net, with hundreds of thousands of MP3 files to download. Many of these files are illegally copied, will cost you nothing and will possibly sound awful into the bargain.

But ever-growing proportions of files are perfectly legal, and sound good enough to warrant the CD-quality tag that's often bandied about without any regard for the truth. An increasing number of big-name companies and acts are also getting into the MP3 groove, with multi-million sellers such as Public Enemy, Alanis Morissette and Everything But The Girl involved in downloadable music – often enraging piracy-wary record companies into the bargain.

These files will generally cost you money although, with prices starting at about $0.50 a shot, it would be churlish to complain. Many are free, though, put there as samplers or by unsigned bands looking for publicity.

THE LEGAL STUFF

It was the development of portable MP3 players that made the recording industry log on and take notice of music on the Net. They have finally realised that the Net isn't just a cosy way of selling more CDs with lower overheads, but that new technology allows people to access music that isn't in a solid form such as a CD or cassette. When Diamond Multimedia released the first MP3 player in the US, the Recording Industry Association of America took the company to court. And although Diamond won the case – the judge ruling that the Rio was not primarily a 'digital audio recording device' and therefore not subject to American copyright law – Net-based music was about to change forever.

The response from concerned record company execs to the

MP3 SUPER TEST ☆ DIAMOND RIO PMP300 SM £150 ☆ LG MPFREE £150

DIAMOND RIO PMP300 SM £150

IN THE FAST-MOVING WORLD of MP3, the PMP300 player is ageing rapidly. The first machine to go on sale in the UK and the player that caused a stir in the States, the 300 looks and feels like a computer product: its black plastic casing and clumsy controls look cheap and rather quaint compared to newer portables. The supplied Rio Manager software is intuitive to use, though, while the MusicMatch Jukebox allows you to make MP3 files from your own CD collection with consummate ease. Sonically, it now sounds thin and computerised compared to most of its rivals – although a simple change of headphones does it the world of good. The PMP300 is the original, but no longer the best. Yet a plummeting retail price – Diamond anticipate a sub £100 price tag before too long – may make this a popular choice for some time yet.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★★
CAPACITY 32Mb with card expansion slot
PROS The price is dropping
CONS A bit long in the tooth
www.diamondmm.com

LG MPFREE £150

KOREAN-BASED LG electronics is renowned for keen pricing. No surprise , then, that the MPfree is a budget and quirky piece of kit – what is that circle at the top all about? And it's alone here in having a display located on the headphones, MiniDisc-style, and a case that's more attractive than the player. There's no flash memory on-board, instead opting for cards in two expansion slots, allowing you to store up to 64Mb of music – although it comes with two 16Mb cards. Setting up on your PC is simple, thanks to the Windows-based management system. Sonically, the MPfree is good, but not great. Its sound is clean and clear, but tonally flatter than any of its rivals here, and never lets you forget you're listening to a compressed format. If the looks and flexibility appeal, then the MPfree could be for you. But if your major consideration is sound, some rivals would serve you better.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★
CAPACITY Up to 64Mb in two slots
PROS Flexible memory system
CONS Dubious looks
www.lgeus.com

MP3 file boom and the flood of players that then appeared was to set up the Secure Digital Music Initiative (SDMI), an organisation with over 100 members including the world's largest music companies.

The SDMI immediately set to work on a downloadable music format with the advantages of MP3, but incorporating a rights management system to end music piracy on the Web.

The group is set to ratify the standard next year, and competing systems from the likes of Microsoft and IBM are currently battling for inclusion in the final standard. Each is linked with a major record label, so as with formats like Digital Compact Cassette vs MiniDisc, it may take ages to sort out.

THE HEAR AND NOW

Meanwhile, MP3 is still going strong. Its main advantages are that it's an open format – anybody can use it without paying royalties – and it's already established, making the record companies and other interested parties' job of suppressing it and introducing a new format harder by the day.

The longer they argue and haggle over eventual standards, the more difficult it will be for the format they agree on to overtake what is already happening with MP3. Even now the SDMI is not ruling out the possibility that MP3 will form part of the eventual standard – how very magnanimous of them.

Manufacturers of MP3 players know that SDMI is powerful, and Diamond – keen to avoid a ban of MP3 and its players – has already joined the group, and incorporated elements of SDMI encoding into its new PMP500 portable. Whatever happens, there will always be MP3 sites and files on the Net; the technology is just too ingrained to go away. However, players may soon have to be programmed to reject pirated files in order to be sold legally.

MP3 SUPER TEST ☆ SCHNEIDER MPMAN F20 £150

SCHNEIDER MPMAN F20 £150

SCHNEIDER MAY NOT be a big name here, but in Europe it's a home-entertainment giant. And the F20 is the work of an entertainment-focused company, its minimalist style lending a class several of its rivals lack. Most controls are located on the top edge, while the small display has a button on either side to control the information mode – letting you know how much space is left on the player – and the bass boost option to adjust the sound. Sonically, it's clear and unruffled, with plenty of detail and kick to the sound. Connection to a PC is via a supplied parallel port cable, and the software CD is simple to install – you'll need a 100 MHz Pentium with 32Mb of RAM. Once you're up and running, the MPMan Manager has a familiar drag-and-drop interface. The downside? No compression software for making your own files. But then thankfully the Net is full of them.

JUST THE FACTS PLEASE

RATING ★★★★
CAPACITY 32Mb with card expansion slot
PROS Stylish good looks
CONS No compression software
www.mpmanbuynow.co.uk

TOP TEN LEGAL MP3 SITES

RioPort ***www.rioport.com***
Top download Upgrades to the Rio file manager.
Home of the Rio players and a great searchable MP3 portal.

MP3 ***www.mp3.com***
Top download 10,000 Maniacs, *The Earth Pressed Flat*

Everything you need is contained within these Delphi-like pages.

MP3NOW ***www.mp3now.com***
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MusicMatch Jukebox
Portal like MP3.com, but with an underground edge.

MP3Yes ***www.mp3yes.com***
Top Download Creed, *Higher*
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E Music ***www.emusic.com***
Top download *Acker Bilk Plays Lennon and McCartney*
Professional site, with a good mix of excellent quality MP3 files.

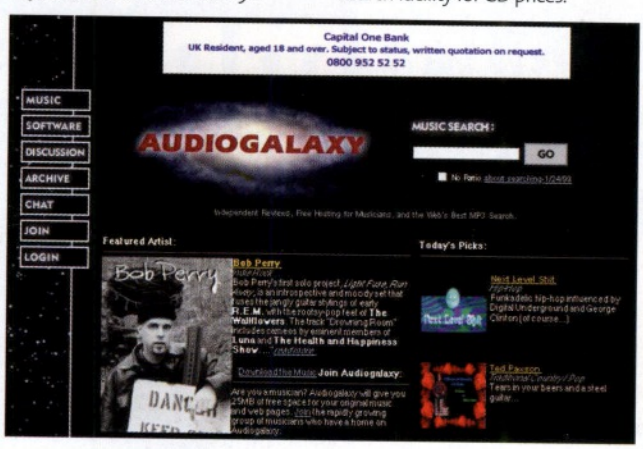
Audiogalaxy
www.audiogalaxy.com
Top download: The Halo Benders, *Do That Thing*
A powerful search engine dedicated to seeking out all those difficult to find MP3 files.

Amp3.com ***www.amp3.com***
Top download: Sue Jeffers, *Postcard From Encinitas*
Has been voted the best Indie site on the Net, and it's easy to see why.

Lycos ***mp3.lycos.com***
Top download
Take your pick, they're all here.
MP3 search engine powered by Lycos – one of the best around.

MP3 Box ***www.mp3.box.sk***
Top download Emmett Brown, *Cover Girl*
Concentrates on legal MP3, so most are sure to be worth downloading.

MP3 2000
www.mp3-2000.com
Top Download Christina Aguilera, *Genie In A Bottle*
MP3 portal with a mind-blowing search facility for CD prices.



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what website?

November 1999

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE NEWEST, NIFTIEST SITES ON THE NET

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What Website? NOVEMBER

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Each month we lock ourselves away in a dark room, with only a modem for company, to search the Net for the most exciting and innovative sites out there. And here they are, divided into 17 categories – with our own site (below) providing the icing on the cake

www.whatwebsite.com

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WITCH

THE FREE SOFTWARE STARTER PACK

THE ULTIMATE HELP BUTTON ***www.thenetmag.co.uk/helpbutton*** Our online guide has all the essential free software reviewed and rated with links

PLAYING MULTIMEDIA BROWSER WATCH
http://browserwatch.internet.com/plug-in.html
A complete list of browser plug-ins.

REALPLAYER G2
www.real.com
Cross-platform free software for streaming movie (RealVideo) and audio (RealAudio) files across the Internet.

QUICKTIME 4.0
www.apple.com/quicktime
Version 4 of this multi-media software will play just about anything, including MP3 files.

MICROSOFT MEDIAPLAYER
www.microsoft.com/mediaplayer
Plays streaming audio and video files saved in the MediaPlayer format.

SHOCKWAVE & FLASH
www.shockwave.com
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106 WEIRD
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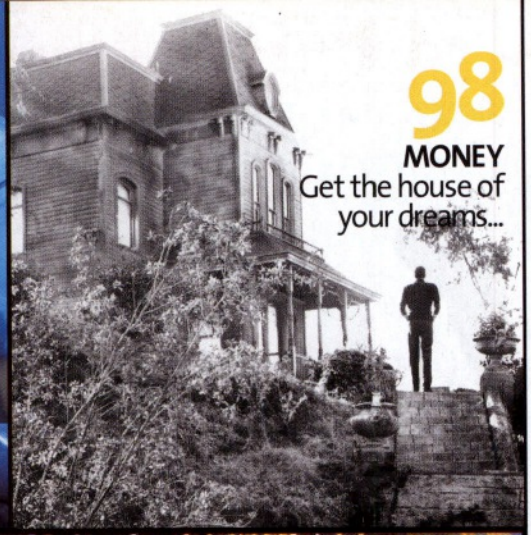

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Get the house of your dreams...

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Kick the habit...

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She may not be a lady, but she's all woman

THE LISTINGS

NOVEMBER 1999

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Surely Blair Witch can't be that scary? Oh yes it is

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Make your own low-budget classic

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Never miss a soap again with the Web

NEW ALBUM RELEASES 76
With those cheeky Supergrass boys

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Remember Bananarama? We do...

NEWS & MEDIA 81
Magazines without staples

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Keep a good length ahead of the rest

SPORT WOMEN'S FOOTBALL 87
The only 'soccer' the Yanks are good at

TRAVEL 88
Pack your skis and head for the snow

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The men who find life a drag

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Learn how to Just Say No online with our guide to addictions

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Find yourself a feed online

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The pain of Internet mortgages

LEARNING 101
Museums without the messing

COMPUTERS 102
Still worried about Y2K shutdown on New Year's Eve? Fret no more

GAMES 104
Dreamcast is here at last – let the Net make you an expert

WEIRD 106
Turn into an online Uri Geller

NEED TO KNOW 108
A cornucopia of the best URLs in existence, for your viewing pleasure

Scare stories

MOVIE RELEASES It's here: the most talked-about movie since *Star Wars* – plus nine other new films

The Blair Witch Project

Heather Donahue, Michael Williams, Joshua Leonard

★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Not since Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead* has a low-budget horror film been so greatly anticipated. Widely hyped online, this novel shocker has such an atmosphere of dread and evil about it that you'll be creeped out from the minute it begins, and for days afterwards. Three student filmmakers go to investigate the Blair Witch legend in the woods near Maryland, shooting the experience as they go. The documentary style dreamed up by directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez, who sent their actors out into the woods with a camera and spent a week screwing with their minds, adds an effective air of authenticity, and though (perhaps because) we don't *see* all that much, this is one scary movie.

www.blairwitch.com

The site that started it all off. Get spooked, buy the merchandise.

***Pushing Tin*: Boeing, Boeing, gone...**

Bowfinger

Steve Martin, Eddie Murphy, Heather Graham, Christine Baranski

★★★★

Steve Martin doubles as writer and star of this hilarious Hollywood farce, playing a down-and-out producer reminiscent of charismatic failure Ed Wood. Determined to make an alien extravaganza, *Chubby Rain*, on a budget of less than $2000, he recruits an oddball crew and stalks the biggest star in town, shooting him in secret and cutting him into the movie. Directed by Frank Oz, this ingenious comedy marks a welcome return to form for Martin and for Murphy, too, here playing dual roles as neurotic superstar Kit and hopeless nerd Jiff.

www.bowfinger.com

Rather stingy plot guide, though the trailers and downloadable photos are more worthwhile.

Deep Blue Sea

Saffron Burrows, Thomas Jane, LL Cool J, Samuel L Jackson ★★★

Cliffhanger director Renny Harlin strands a bunch of research types in a damaged and sinking marine research facility, saddles them with a leaden script and sets a posse of malevolent sharks in pursuit of their vital organs. The human element fails to convince, but much of the shark stuff is excellent and makes the movie worth watching. Derivative, stupid but gripping.

***Bowfinger*: two great talents. And this pair**

www.wb-deepbluesea.com

Ambitious site presented as an 'Aquatic Research Centre'.

Fight Club

Brad Pitt, Edward Norton, Helena Bonham Carter ★★★

From David Fincher, director of the wildly overrated *Seven*, comes this odd tale of yuppie violence. Norton steals the show as a by-the-book type who's tired of his safe, ordinary existence. Enter Pitt, who introduces him to the secret world of the Fight Club, where young men meet to beat the living hell out of one another. Add Bonham Carter as the bit-of-rough-seeking woman in the middle, and

WHAT THE SITES ARE SAYING

	aint-it-cool-news.com	cinematter.com	eonline.com	film.com	mrcranky.com	salon.com
Blair Witch Project	👍	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍
Bowfinger	👎	👍	👎	👍	👍	👎
Deep Blue Sea	👎	👎	👍	👍	👍	👎
Tarzan	👎	👎	👍	👍	👎	👎
The Sixth Sense	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎	👍

you have a glossy, self-consciously controversial drama that's certainly watchable, if not involving.
www.fightclub.com
Unofficial site that makes a good fist of downloads, news and reviews.

The Limey

Terence Stamp, Peter Fonda, Barry Newman, Luis Guzman ★★★
Arty revenge feature from *Sex, Lies And Videotape* director Steven Soderbergh. The film's a custom-made vehicle for Stamp as cockney ex-con Wilson, a limey in LA on the trail of the bad guys who did in his daughter. Amusing and short, it's marred by too many distracting flashbacks and peculiar flourishes.
www.filmscouts.com/scripts/film.cfm?Film=limey
Archive of interviews and info from the film's Cannes preview.

The Out-of-Towners

Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn, John Cleese ★★
The king and queen of safe comedy, Steve Martin (who, even now, can do much better) and Goldie Hawn, team up for the first time since *Housesitter* for a similarly sanitised adventure. A cuddly remake of Neil Simon's dark original, in which Jack Lemmon and Sandy Dennis endured 24 hours in the hell that is New York, this updated feature is more of an adventure than a nightmare, as Steve and Goldie stumble from one mishap to another, supported by snooty hotel manager Cleese.
www.outoftowners.com
How many pictures of Goldie Hawn can you stand? Find out here.

Pushing Tin

John Cusack, Billy Bob Thornton, Cate Blanchett, Angelina Jolie ★★★
What appears at first to be an edgy black comedy eventually descends into formula, but it's a fun journey all the same. Cusack plays a tightly wired air traffic controller who's determined to undermine the icy Zen cool of newcomer Thornton. Strong performances all round, with an amusing script from sitcom brothers Glen and Les Charles, and a handful of mid-air close encounters to get your pulse racing.
www.foxmovies.com/pushingtin/
Bog-standard A-Z of plot and stars. Nice biographies, though.

The Sixth Sense

Bruce Willis, Haley Joel Osment, Toni Collette ★★★★
A progressively creepy psychological horror flick with a couple of vivid scares and a mind-wrenching twist, this is involving and intelligent. Willis acts his socks off as a child psychologist who risks his marriage to help a terrified eight-year-old boy who sees ghosts. Sensitively written and cleverly directed by the oddly named M Night Shyamalan, this action-free but atmospheric, Philadelphia-set drama is well worth your time – not least because it'll stay with you long after you leave the cinema.
movies.go.com/sixthsense/index.html
'Not every gift is a blessing.' That's the message. And, bar a reasonably enticing trailer, there's not much given away on this site.

Tarzan: what's that blood-curdling growling? Oh, it's just Phil Collins

Out-of-Towners: safe in the city

Tarzan

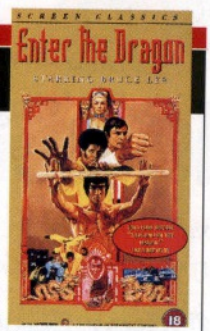
Tony Goldwyn, Minnie Driver, Glenn Close ★★★★★
Disney delivers an ape-man to remember as Burroughs' jungle tale receives a spectacular animated makeover. It's surprisingly exciting, with gorgeous visuals, a notable sense of humour and a typically all-star voice cast. The snag is the soundtrack music, by the dreadful Phil Collins, who groans away throughout. Otherwise, it's a splendid feather in Disney's cap.
disney.go.com/worldsofdisney/tarzan/
Merchandise-heavy, of course, but 'Jungle Grams' and downloads make it worth a visit.

The Tichbourne Claimant

John Kani, Robert Pugh, Rachael Dowling ★★★
Portly, obnoxious booze-hound Pugh attempts to swindle the well-to-do Tichbourne family by claiming to be their long-lost son. It's authentically made, with an eye for detail and an ear for dialogue. Strong support comes from Stephen Fry, Robert Hardy and John Gielgud, plus Anita Dobson (of *EastEnders* fame) as appropriately-named local madam Fanny Loader. Really.
www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/archives/claim.html
Read the original story of the claimant, courtesy of the local paper.

CLASSIC MOVIE

ENTER THE DRAGON



Bruce Lee, John Saxon, Jim Kelley (1973)
Lee's first and last Stateside production is a non-stop fistfest with first-class production values and a funky score. Vengeance draws the Little Dragon to the island stronghold of one-handed crime boss Han (Shih Kien). As luck would have it, a local martial arts tournament provides our hero with a perfect opportunity to pound bad guys. High on '70s style, this is one of the most memorable fight flicks ever made.
www.geocities.com/Colosseum/1705/BruceLee.html
All the Bruce Lee information you could wish for in one swift swipe.

Now showing at your local shop...

VIDEO RENTALS Soothe yourself with a soppy cartoon – or scare yourself silly

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Brendan Fraser, Alicia Silverstone, Christopher Walken
Having spent his entire life in a bomb shelter, a '50s time capsule shared with eccentric parents Walken and Sissy Spacek, Fraser faces up to '90s life and falls in love with our Alicia. A cute, funny, fish-out-of-water tale.
www.blastmovie.com

AN IDEAL HUSBAND

Rupert Everett, Cate Blanchett, Minnie Driver
Watchable but stagy adaptation of Oscar Wilde's comedy of manners, an all-star tale of love and politics, Victorian-style. A witty and well-dressed cast do their best, with Everett stealing the show. Enjoy and forget.
www.miramax.com

8MM

Nicolas Cage, Catherine Keener, Joaquin Phoenix
Ugly, over-long thriller from the consistently useless Joel Schumacher, director of Gotham City-based flop *Batman and Robin*. Nicolas Cage, investigating the gruesome contents of an 8mm snuff movie he's stumbled upon, pokes around the porno biz while wife Keener mopes about and complains. Don't bother...
www.spe.sony.com/movies/8mm

PRINCE OF EGYPT

Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes
Epic animated feature from Dreamworks SKG, competing with the best of Disney, following the story of brothers Moses and Ramses' differing fortunes in ancient Egypt. Beautiful to look at and intelligent, too; a grand, exciting Biblically-based epic with a well characterised screenplay and top computer-generated effects. Moses would surely approve.
www.prince-of-egypt.com

I STILL KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER

Jennifer Love Hewitt, Freddie Prinze Jr, Brandy
Teen-scream sequel has Hewitt menaced once again by the hook-handed, sou'wester-sporting Fisherman. Plenty of gore in a *Scream*-type fashion, and a few scares along the way for the easily-frightened. Cheesy and utterly obvious, but reasonably effective as these things go.
www.istillknow.com

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Kevin Costner, Robin Wright Penn, Paul Newman
An unforgiveably feeble, soppy, painfully slow-moving romance: Penn finds a slushy love note in the sea, written by Costner to his dead wife, and lurve inevitably follows, aided by his grumpy father (Newman). As wet as the ocean and duller than a rainy day in Ponders End.
www.message-bottle.com

WORDS: JMARSHALL JULIUS; PICTURES: 20TH CENTURY FOX, PATHE

'Can you keep your clothes on this time, Miss Kidman?'

I could do better myself

DIY MOVIES Inspired by *The Blair Witch Project*? Looking to make your own micro-budget blockbuster in your own back garden? Look no further...

Alt.Folklore. Urban Legends

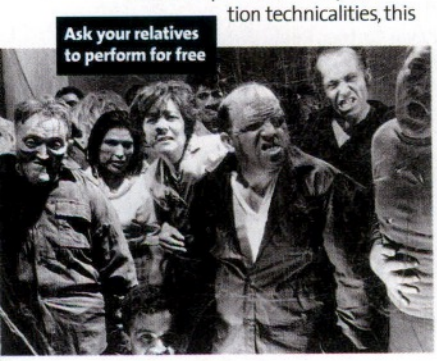
www.urbanlegends.com ★★★★

If you're thinking about making your own low-budget horror flick, you're going to need a top-notch idea. Well, instead of inventing an urban myth, why not pinch one that's already doing the rounds? You'll find thousands of weird and wonderful bits of modern folklore at this plain and simple site. By the way, we know this is true because it happened to someone our next-door neighbour used to know...

British Film Institute

www.bfi.org.uk/home.htm ★★★★

OK, no jokes. It's time to do some serious surfing. If you're really determined to make your own film, the British Film Institute's Web site is a comprehensive source of advice and information on every aspect of independent cinema. If you're in need of expert advice on production technicalities, this should be your first port of a call: follow the 'Production' link on the home page to read the indispensable 'Low Budget Film Guide'.


Ask your relatives to perform for free

Cyber Film School

www.cyberfilmschool.com

★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

This is film-makers' heaven – if Martin Scorsese cybersurfs, this is where he does it. Whether you're shooting on a dusty old Super-8 or a shiny new Hi-8, here's a gold-mine of information on getting your masterpiece in the can, not to mention a master class in site design: listen to audio interviews with directors and producers, read reviews of new indie films, download scripts and specialist software, or just browse a library of articles on every aspect of film-making. That's a wrap.

The producers soon replaced Winner

Filmmag.com

www.filmmag.com ★★★★

Billed as the online resource for the independent film-maker, this is a must-bookmark site for all Robert Rodriguez wannabes, with all the latest news and views from the indie film scene, plus a selection of articles from the latest issue of *Filmmaker* magazine. Try the resource archive, with its hundreds of categorised links to essential sites for screenwriters, producers, directors and cinematographers.

Film Underground

www.filmunderground.com/filmunderground/main.asp ★★★★

Now let's get down to the nitty gritty of shooting your own movie. Spend long enough studying the reels of information at the Film Underground and you'll be shopping for your Oscar-night tux before you know it. This is a beautifully simple site, split into the pre-production, production and post-production phases of film-making. If you have an urge to know all about such things as A/B roll editing, checkboarding and splicing for 16mm film – and who doesn't? – look no further.

Filming: a poor way to impress girls

House of Horrors

www.houseofhorrors.com/index.htm

★★★★★

An excellent, very cool, multimedia site arranged like a funfair haunted house. Visit 'The Vault' to mug up on the films that inspired the makers of *The Blair Witch Project*, check out endless stills and sounds from other low-budget classic frighteners such as *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, read interviews with directors and actors. Hats off to hosts Internet Zombie Productions for this professional site. As they say, 'There is terror in every room'.

Robert Rodriguez

members.tripod.com/BorderLine/index2.html ★★★

If you need further assurance that you can make it big with a few quid, visit this homage to director Robert Rodriguez. Inspired by Tarantino, Rodriguez made the assassin-with-a-guitar-case flick *El Mariachi* for just $7000 (well, that's the headline figure – call it $220,000 after post-production). Read the text of Rodriguez's famous 10-minute film school. Today Milton Keynes Arts Centre, tomorrow Hollywood. Perhaps.

Screenwriters & Playwrights Home Page

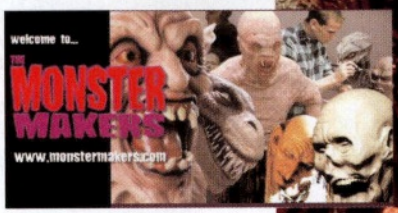
www.teleport.com /~cdeemer/scrwriter.html ★★★★

So you're inspired by Haxan Films' overnight success, great-aunt Maude's gone to the big movie theatre in the sky and left you £25,000, and you're going to make

MOVIE HORRORS

Monster, monster

If you're going to make your own horror movie, there's a good chance you want your actors to look, well, horrible. If so, you'll need to mug up on your make-up skills. Special effects artists are the unsung heroes of cinema, and among the most successful is Dick Smith. He's renowned in the SFX world for having a cosmetic finger which was used as the model for the Gelfings' fingers in Jim Henson's *Dark Crystal*. Find out how to create your own effects from Monster Makers at *www.monstermakers.com/index.html*



Mrs Beardsley always enjoyed looking at her wedding snaps

best film sites ★★★★★

where can I...

GET LATEST NEWS AND RELEASE DATES?

www.popcorn.co.uk
Gives a British perspective on latest releases and gossip, plus full listings for local cinemas.
www.corona.bc.ca/films/filmlistings.html
A complicated, vast site which gives the inside track on forthcoming films. Impressively accurate.
www.filmreview.co.uk
A smartly-designed, user-friendly site focusing exclusively on current UK cinema releases.
www.filmworld.co.uk
News, trailers and events, as well as videos and DVDs to buy.

DECIDE WHAT TO SEE?

www.salon.com/ent/movies
The most cerebral, well-written reviews on the Web.
www.cinemachine.com
Retrieve reviews of your chosen films from an extensive archive.
aint-it-cool-news.com
Hundreds of reviews, as well as the most exclusive news. Beware the difficult-to-navigate format, though.
www.mrcranky.com
The amusing protagonist casts his critical eye over the latest releases – and decides they're rubbish.

FIND OFFICIAL FILM SITES?

uk.imdb.com
It cannot be stressed highly enough how comprehensive this site is.
www.foxmovies.com
Links to all 20th Century Fox releases.
www.movies.warnerbros.com
Umbrella site featuring WB's new films and long-forgotten classics.
www.universalstudios.com/universal_pictures/
All your favourites, in glorious Technicolor.

SEARCH FOR OBSCURE FILMS AND SCRIPTS?

www.script-o-rama.com
Read rejected scripts for well-known films and transcripts of obscure ones.
www.ohthehumanity.com
The worst movies of all time, lovingly detailed. *Teenage Catgirls in Heat*, anyone?
www.badmovies.org
The best B-movies of all time, presented with clips and stills. Immense fun for all the family.
www.losman.com/fod.htm
A site dedicated to gruesome death in films. Which is nice.

FIND A CINEMA?

www.warnervillage.co.uk
Now offering online booking for its 20-odd cinemas around the country.
cinema.scoot.co.uk
Sort of *Yellow Pages* for cinemas. Easiest to use of all online guides.
www.virgin.net/cinema/index.html
Excellent film and cinema locator. Simply enter a title and/or postcode to get locations and pithy reviews.
www.odeon.co.uk
Book online, or peruse the latest releases. A stylish and useful site.

BUY OR RENT VIDEOTAPES?

www.reel.com
Thirty percent savings off suggested US prices on DVDs, plus second-hand videos.
www.blackstar.co.uk
Regular discounts, DVDs and charts to help you decide on your buy.
www.filmstore.co.uk
Odeon-run store with competitive prices on new releases.
www.blockbuster.co.uk
The site of the shop; no more, no less. Nice features on new videos.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

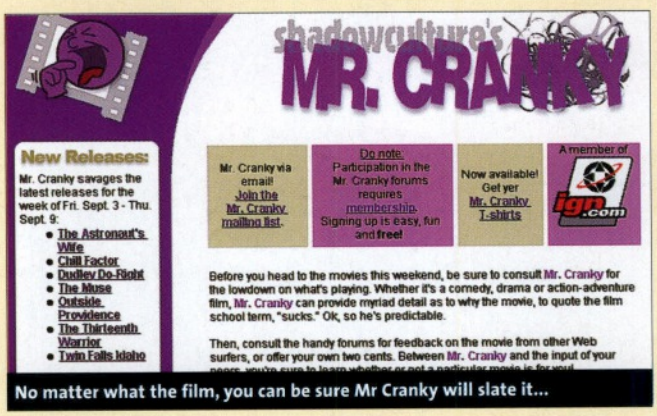
alt.movies.cinematography
Discuss the ins and outs of making movies here.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Send an email with 'subscribe' in the body to ***majordomo@lists.xmission.com*** for movie news and chat.

GET CHATTING?

animestation.com
Cartoon fans can wax lyrical here about their favourite toons.


shadowculture's
MR. CRANKY
New Releases:
Mr. Cranky savages the latest releases for the week of Fri. Sept. 3 - Thu. Sept. 9:
The Astronaut's Wife
Chill Factor
Dudley Do-Right
The Muse
Outside Providence
The Thirteenth Warrior
Twin Falls Idaho
Mr. Cranky via email! Join the Mr. Cranky mailing list.
Do note: Participation in the Mr. Cranky forums requires membership. Signing up is easy, fun and free!
Now available! Get yer Mr. Cranky T-shirts
A member of ign.com
Before you head to the movies this weekend, be sure to consult Mr. Cranky for the lowdown on what's playing. Whether it's a comedy, drama or action-adventure film, Mr. Cranky can provide myriad detail as to why the movie, to quote the film school term, "sucks." Ok, so he's predictable.
Then, consult the handy forums for feedback on the movie from other Web surfers, or offer your own two cents. Between Mr. Cranky and the input of your

No matter what the film, you can be sure Mr Cranky will slate it...

The Singing Detective suddenly felt amorous

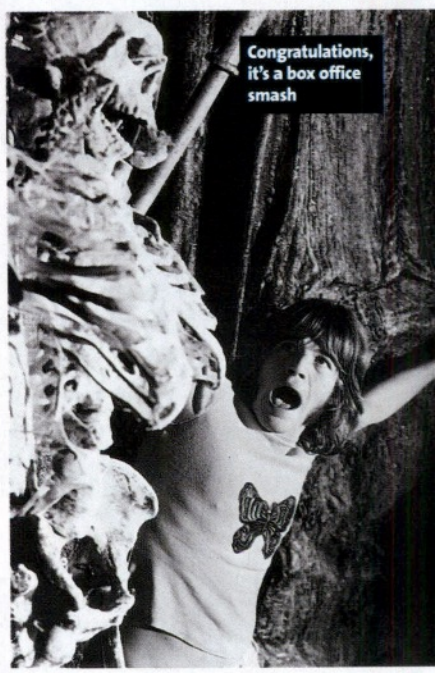
your own movie. First up, you need to write a screenplay. Drop by Charles Deemer's award-winning resources for screenwriters site and find out why his top tip is 'The chainsaw is your friend'.

Sundance Festival

www.sundance.org ★★★
Every January since 1981, when Robert Redford and his pals established the Institute, Sundance, Utah has been at the epicentre of US independent film. The shockwaves from *Blair Witch* can be traced to last year's Sundance Festival, where it premiered along with nearly 300 other low-budget films. Find inspiration in the database of past Sundance successes or download trailers of the best films to your desktop.

Vent! Rants

www.li.net/~filmfrk/vent/rants.htm ★★★
Let off steam with other frustrated directors whose dreams of superstardom have faded amid the harsh realities of the film world. Can't get financing for your epic? Angry with the studio system for ignoring your directorial genius? This is the place for you. Mixed in with rants and raves are islands of inspiration: bios of film-makers who struggled for years but eventually made it big. Did you know that Francis Ford Coppola cut his teeth on soft-focus, soft-porn features?



Congratulations, it's a box office smash

DIARY **29 October** Horror Day UK sees the release of Blair Witch Project, Vampires, Summer Of Sam and Lost Souls

uk.imdb.com

[still taken from "Screwed" starring Martin Hancock. Director Ben Cobb. Exclusive to Reelscreen.com]

reelfilms reelpeople reeltime

reelscreen.com
www.reelscreen.com
the creative arts network online

new films, new music and more cool than you can cope with. **www.reelscreen.com**

JR was delighted with his new ventriloquist dummy

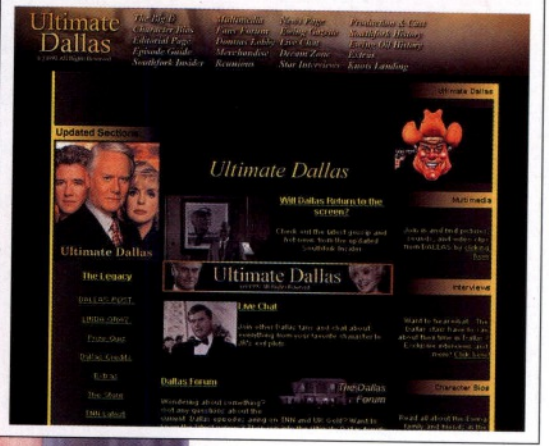
WORDS: SUE WEEKES; PICTURES: REX

Ultimate Dallas

www.dallas.ndirect.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

'A limited series with a limited future,' wrote a *Variety* critic when *Dallas* was launched in 1978. Over 20 years on you can join 'Donna's lobby' to get the show back on our screens (she'll email CBS and Larry Hagman). And, if all efforts fail, you can still relive some of the greatest moments in TV history – from the days when JR, 'Swellin' and Barby ruled the small screen – here, with oodles of RealVideo and Audio. No, it certainly wasn't a dream.



Living life in a bubble

SOAP OPERAS If you can't get through Monday without a Corrie update, you'll be delighted to learn your favourite soaps are online

Bill's All Things Emmerdale

www.emmerdale.forceg.co.uk/emmerdale.html ★★★★

'Appen this doesn't leave too many stones unturned about life in the dales. And, given that murder, drug-taking, lesbianism, adultery, and even a McGann brother are the show's meat and potatoes these days, there's plenty to talk about. The design is distinctly fan-site, but content-wise it'll match an official site any day and features a good spoiler section. We won't give anything away – but that poor Kathy...

Brookside

www.brookie.com ★★★★

Rather than just build on what was there before, Brookie creator Phil Redmond has wiped out the old official site for his soap and started again. Given recent events at our Lindsey's club, fans will be familiar with such tactics. Coming soon is the chance to chat with actors and scriptwriters, so you can ask: how come Ron's syrup has stayed on in two blasts?

EastEnders

www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders/ ★★★★

There's everything here, including the address to which you should send your aspiring *EastEnders* script. 'Your story should be emotionally driven and contain more than one story-line,' says the site's advice. Certainly can't argue about the first bit since, at the time of writing, befreckled Bianca was screeching her way out of the square. Don't forget to check out the Walford Webcam, permanently fixed on the set.

Soap couples: rarely last long

Hollyoaks

www.hollyoaks.com ★

Even Phil Redmond admits that this official site on the mobile-phone-carrying Chester teenagers is sadly lacking, and says it'll undergo the same kind of transformation as its Mersey TV stable-mate. Apart from an episode guide, the only real reason to go there is to email MerseyTV to ask when they're revamping it.

Home & Away

homeandaway.seven.com.au ★★★

It's official: 'It is always summer in Summer Bay,' explains this sunny site. It also confirms suspicions that original matriarch Pippa spent most of her on-screen hours baking – she made 3500 cakes and 10,000

TV DINNERS

Snack attack

Remember Bar Six? Mourn the passing of the Amazin' Raisin Bar? Mop up those tears with *www.tv.cream.org*, which gives you a nostalgic taste of many of those long-lost childhood snacks and fizzy drinks in its Best Before section. What's it got to do with TV? Well, it was the TV ads that made many of them – the 'frothy man' Cresta bear, Magnus Pike and square-shaped crips... There's also reference to a lesser-known range of northern fizzy drinks called 'Charles Hague's'. In case you haven't guessed it yet, Charles also begat Tory leader William. So while it seems some fizzies made kids teeth fall out, the Hague range went straight to the head.

muffins before her exit. Sadly, it doesn't tell you why loveable bimbo Marilyn ever married Mr Fisher, nor why real-life actress Emily Symons has seen fit to hook up with footballer Matthew Le Tissier.

Mike Plowman's Coronation Street Visual Updates

ds.dial.pipex.com/town/plaza/ec91/ ★★★★

Download a screensaver of the country's most dysfunctional family (the Battersbys, not the Simpsons), or some Rover's wall-paper to deck out your desktop. This has much more humour than the official Granada online effort at ***www.coronationstreet.co.uk*** and features one of the best – and most amusing – episode guides.

Neighbours

www.pearsontv.com/neighbours

★★★★

Go on, click that spoiler, you know you want to. The official site from Pearson has kindly stamped an Australian flag on any episodic information that might give the game away to UK viewers (there's a four-month gap between UK and Australian transmissions). For those who'd rather look back there's plenty, too, with a chance to vote for your favourite Magic Moment, which includes video of landmark events such as the meeting of Scott and Charlene. You'll also find exclusive cast interviews.

Oh Bianca, you've aged; PCBH girls will be girls (right)

best TV sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND PROGRAMME GUIDES FOR POPULAR SHOWS?

www.nbc.com/tvcentral/shows/frasier/episodeguide/guide11.html
Not quite up to date but the most complete episode guide for *Frasier*.
web.ukonline.co.uk/martin.whale/
UK-based *Friends* site: episode guide and scripts from every show.
www.snpp.com/episodeguide.html
Every *Simpsons* episode ever made, with great downloads and detail.
beef-cake.com/taison/episode.htm
At-a-glance guide to *South Park*, with pictures of favourite moments.

LOOK UP MY FAVOURITE TV PERSONALITY?

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Lot/8198/actress.htm
If you have a favourite TV actress, go to the TV Actress Directory.
www.pathfinder.com/people/web/index.html
People Magazine's speciality is B-list celebs: find your favourite here.
www.nyt.co.uk/celebrit.htm
Book a Brit celebrity – eg Eddie 'the Eagle' Edwards – for your event.
www.jerryspringer.com
Everyone's favourite talk-show host has a surprisingly uncontentious Web presence. 'My Wife is Sleeping with My Aunt,' indeed.

BUY TV MEMORABILIA?

www.tvtoys.com
Pick up TV toys, books – the lot. Most should find a favourite here, including a Bionic Woman board game. Quite possibly heaven.
www.universal-studios.net/movieprops.html
Log in and head for the shop – a Jean-Luc Picard doll for a mere $35?
www.comedycentral.com/store/
Where to pick up your favourite *South Park* toys direct from the States.
www.ctvb.com
Mail order memorabilia including classic books, guides and mags.

FIND TV LISTINGS?

www.toaster.co.uk
Well presented electronic programme guide – also lets you search for shows by genre.
www.freeserve.co.uk/tvnradio/
Quick and complete guide, plus a handy instant soap update.

Breakfast telly – get all your whole day's viewing sorted at www.toaster.co.uk

ptv.ucd.ie/ptv
Register with On the Box to use its personalised listings facility.
www.digiguide.co.uk
Customised guide to British telly, with schedules and reviews.

FIND TV NEWS AND INFO?

tv.cream.org
One of the best resources on the Net for long-dead shows.
www.bigglethwaite.com
Everything you could ever need to know about British TV online.
www.ultimatetv.com
American-influenced site with links to current shows, gossip and info. Great 'Ask Mr TV' facility.

WATCH TV?

www.bloomberg.com/products/tv.html
Breaking news and top business stories, 24 hours a day.
www.beeb.com
Watch news or programme snippets in RealVideo.
www.broadcast.com
If it's happening live, it'll be listed somewhere in Broadcast.
www.livetv.wwitv.com
Connects you to more than 100 live TV stations from over 40 countries.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.arts.tv.uk.coronation-st
Talk with other Corrie nuts.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Want to find out about writing TV shows? Mail ***majordomo@spies.com*** with info episodic-1 in the message

GET CHATTING?

Talk about the Holy Grail, Flying Circus or the Naughty Bits here:
www.pythonline.com/chitchat/chat/realchat/livechat/

Looking for more television sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

Sunset Beach

www.nbc.com/tvcentral/daytimecentral/fr_sunsetbeach.htm
★★★★

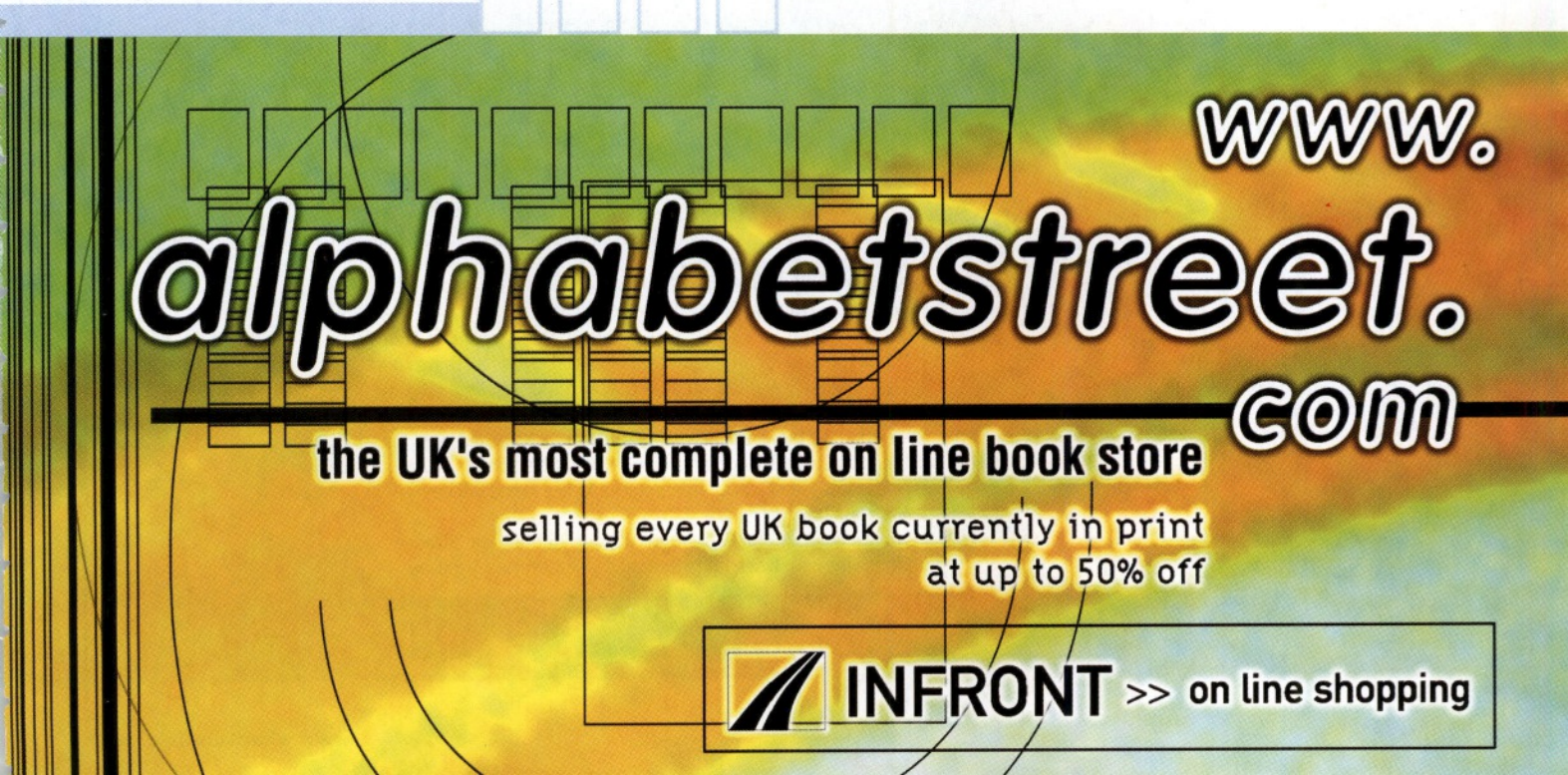
The omnibus of this increasingly strange (and strangely popular) soap is now almost as established a part of a good Saturday afternoon as a Premier League match – and a good bit longer, at a whopping 170 minutes. It sure ain't *Dallas* (or even *Dynasty*, for that matter), but if you can really bear any more of Aaron Spelling's super bitchy, high-gloss hit, you'll bookmark this definitive site .

Who's Who in Wentworth

www.zen.co.uk/home/page/zahid.john/prisoner/induct.htm
★★★★

Heaven forbid that *Prisoner*'s popularity is on the wane, but even die-hard fans seem to have given up on updating many of the sites. Fear not, you can depend on a corner of the Net that's forever *PCBH*. John Lenton's homage to the cult Aussie series is fully intact, with 2300 character credits and a massive episode guide which advises fans that if Channel 5 maintains its current schedule, you'll be able to see episode 692 on Saturday, 10 February, 2001. For sound and movie files, go to ***www.ajmw.demon.co.uk/pris.html***.

www.
dvdstreet.
com
the UK's greatest on line DVD store
selling every region 2 DVD at up to 50% off
free delivery in the UK


www.
alphabetstreet.
com
the UK's most complete on line book store
selling every UK book currently in print
at up to 50% off
INFRONT >> on line shopping

Like it's 1999...

NEW RELEASES It's the millennium's second-to-last bunch of new CDs. Listen – and plan that party now

WORDS: JOHN MULLEN; PICTURES: REX, RETNA

Apollo 440

Gettin' High On Your Own Supply
STEALTH SONIC/EPIC ★★★★
These big-beat baboons are great at crafting songs that are both utterly ridiculous and crazily compulsive. You've probably heard the Status Quo-sampling *Stop The Rock*, but even better is the pounding *Perfect Crime*, the breakbeats merging into a screaming array of sirens and revving motors. The ultimate millennium party album, perhaps?
asterope.bajaobs.hu/~sentinel/apollo/apollo440.html
Learn those guitar tabs in full (Quo fans will know a few already).

Billy Bragg

Reaching To The Converted
COOKING VINYL ★★★★
As he's presently embroiled in a messy dispute with the Manics over the nature of communal loos, it's good to be reminded why Billy has a reputation as the true successor to Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan. This 'odds-and-ends' collection contains the classic rallying cry *Days Like These*, but it also shows Bragg's surprising gift for soppy lurve songs.
www.billybragg.co.uk
Your one-stop shop for the Bard of Barking, including a mailing list and message boards.

Guided By Voices

Do The Collapse
CREATION ★★★★
They've long been celebrated by the likes of Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore and the Beasties' Mike D, but it seems that Guided By Voices' moment has arrived. Diving into the mainstream with the synth-drenched *Teenage FBI*, this is alternative rock filtered through the gorgeous harmonies of the Beach Boys and the perfect pop of Blondie.
www.gbv.com
Get the lowdown on all those GBV offshoots on this packed site. Definitely not low-fi.

Iggy: looking well for a man of 23

Billy: does a good line in lurve songs. For a whinger.

Hepburn

Hepburn
COLUMBIA ★★
Hepburn became famous with *I Quit*, a song that Natalie Imbruglia rejected in favour of *Torn* – which is appropriate, as everything about Hepburn seems a little secondhand. They're a bit like All Saints shorn of Shaznay or the Spice Girls without Posh, Sporty and Scary. 'I Quit'? If only.
www.hepburn.net 'They're the Shangri-Las with knuckledusters, Blondie meets Chrissie Hynde for the Sunny Delight generation.' Is that so?

Iggy Pop

Avenue B **VIRGIN** ★★★★
Named after the New York street Iggy abandoned in favour of life in Miami, this is a more valid return to the pop fray by an old stager than some others of late. At least this one's kept enough dignity to avoid singing with Jonathan Ross. It's nice to see the gnarled one growing old disgracefully, barking lines like 'Her French is perfect, so's her butt'.
www.contrib.andrew.cmu.edu/~jacquez/iggy/ Reverential fan page, with great anecdotes about the Igster's crazy rock'n'roll lifestyle.

Tom Jones

Reload **GUT** ★
The Welsh bawler has been back in vogue critically ever since his cover version of Prince's *Kiss* with the Art of Noise, but this is a rehabilitation too far. Featuring collaborations with the Divine Comedy, the

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

Supergrass

Supergrass **PARLOPHONE** ★★★★★
With indie music becoming ever more po-faced (cheer up Thom!), thank the Lord for Supergrass' unashamed love of all things pop. They originally wanted to call this album '*Monkey Tennis*', which sums up the delightful irreverence on display here, whether it's the glam stomp of *Pumping On Your Stereo* or the cod-psychedelia of *Jesus Came From Outer Space*. And lead singer Gaz Coombes still looks like Amos Brierley. Mutton-chopped genius.
www.supergrass.com Official site, fittingly dubbed the 'Strange Ones' site, with lyrics, tabs, news and sideburn-heavy gallery.

Stereophonics and, God help us, Space, Tom shouts his way through songs like Talking Heads' *Burning Down The House*, showing all the restraint of a Wednesday night karaoke session in Pontypridd. Please don't buy this. You'll only encourage him. ***www.kensai.com/personal/tomjones/*** Get your Tom Jones wallpaper here, or enjoy those classic lyrics.

Leftfield

Rhythm And Stealth
HARD HANDS/HIGHER GROUND
★★★★

It's been a long time since the revolutionary *Leftism* album, but the wait hasn't been in vain. Stand-out track is *Phat Planet*, already famous for being the soundrack to that Guinness advertisement with the old bloke surfing. In fact, the only disappointment is the absence of the unusual vocal collaborations that made the first album intriguing. Des O'Connor must've been on holiday... ***w3.adb.gu.se/~s94dalle/leftfield/leftfield.html*** Unlike most other technologically-minded dance pioneers, Leftfield don't have their own official site, so you'll have to make do with this one.

Ocean Colour Scene

One From The Modern
MCA/UNIVERSAL ★★

OCS singer Simon Fowler had the traumatic experience of being outed by the gutter press, but that's no excuse for this soul-searching tosh. The worst example is *Profit In Peace*, which is basically *Give Peace A Chance* with even worse lyrics: 'All those who lost their feet or hands, Don't wanna fight no more.' What, really? ***www.oceancolourscene.com*** Careful now – the music starts as soon as you enter this page. Best visit alone.

Stereolab

Cobra and Phases Group Play Voltage In The Milky Night
DUOPHONIC ★★★

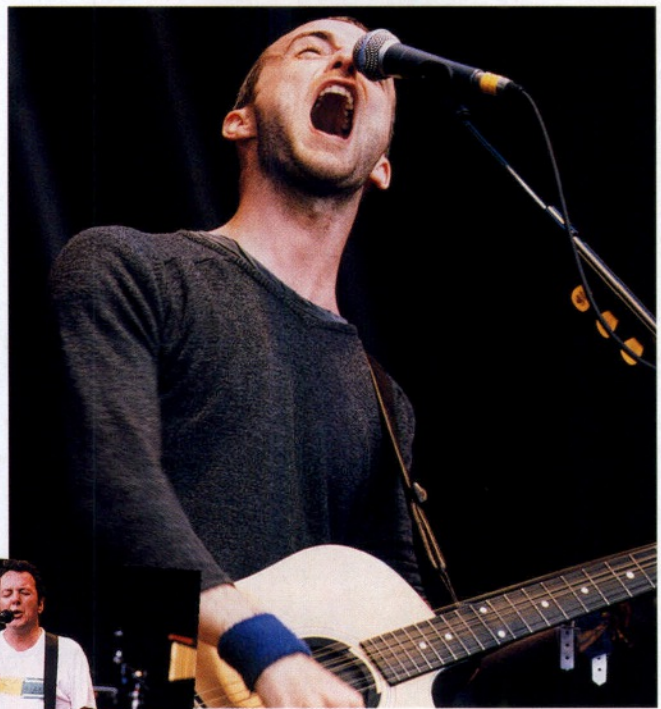
Two words perfectly describe the new Stereolab album: 'Mmm, nice.' They've ditched techno-hugging futurism for a more soft-edged, freewheeling sound, with chanteuse Laetitia Sadier sounding as bored as ever. It's all very nice but just a little bit middle-aged; the perfect soundtrack for a trip to Ikea. ***www.elektra.com/alternative_club/stereolab/stereolab.html*** Audio and video clips, plus a full discography.

Gig and tour guide

OCTOBER The cold's setting in but there's still plenty of hot music on the way

FAITHLESS

Funky yet lyrical, thoughtful but hot, Max and crew do the rounds again. **11 October** Birmingham Sanctuary, **12 October** London Astoria 2, **13 October** Norwich UEA, **15 October** Cardiff University, **16 October** Sheffield University, **17 October** Newcastle University ***www.faithless.de/faithless.htm***



BETH ORTON

Folksy strummer Orton hits the British roads. Think winsome rather than raucous. **17 October** Manchester University, **18 October** Sheffield University, **19 October** Birmingham Alexandra Theatre, **22 October** Southampton Guildhall, **24 October** Bristol Colston Hall, **27 October** Norwich UEA, **2 November** London Shepherd's Bush Empire. ***www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Arena/4449/***

Joe Strummer (left) and Travis (above)

JOE STRUMMER AND THE MESCALEROS

The Clash hero hits the road with his new band. **18 October** Nottingham Rock City, **19 October** Leeds Town and Country, **21 October** London Astoria, **23 October** Norwich UEA, **25 October** Cardiff University, **26 October** Wolverhampton Civic Hall, **28 October** Manchester Academy ***members.tripod.com/joe_strummer***

Skin: look, listen, learn

SKUNK ANANSIE

Political sub-metal with Skin's outstanding vocals. **11 October** Manchester Arena, **13 October** Glasgow Barrowlands, **14 October** Wolverhampton Civic Hall, **17 October** Portsmouth Guildhall, **19-20 October** Brixton Academy. ***skunkanansie.resoftlinks.net***

SUPERGRASS

They are young, they run free, and they're plugging their new album near you. **9 October** Cardiff University, **10 October** Wolverhampton Civic Hall, **12 October** London Forum ***www.supergrass.com***

TEXAS

Sharleen Spiteri's breezy outfit sail into town. **20 October** Brighton Centre, **22 October** Bournemouth International Centre, **23 October** Cardiff International Arena, **26 October** Manchester Arena, **30-31 October** Glasgow SECC, **2-3 November** Wembley Arena. ***listen.to/texas***

TRAVIS

Friends of *the net* and scourge of meteorologists everywhere. **15 October** Leicester De Montfort University, **16 October** Bristol University, **17 October** Cardiff University, **19 October** Reading University, **20 October** Nottingham Rock City, **21 October** Liverpool L2, **23 October** Manchester Academy, **24 October** Lancaster Sugarhouse, **25 October** Oxford Brookes University, **28 October** Birmingham Sanctuary, **28 October** Portsmouth Pyramids, **29 October** Folkestone Leas Cliffe Hall, **31 October** London Shepherd's Bush Empire ***www.travisonline.com***

CLASSIC ALBUM

Kraftwerk

Trans-Europe Express **CAPITOL (1977)**

'From station to station back to Dusseldorf City/ Meet Iggy Pop and David Bowie...' With their austere visages and matching suits, it's always been hard to tell how serious Kraftwerk are about their art. But surely they've never made a more beautiful album than *Trans-Europe Express*. The title track played a part in the birth of hip-hop, believe it or not (it's sampled on Afrika Bambaata's seminal *Planet Rock*); possibly better still is the classical modernism of *Europe Endless* and *Franz Schubert*. ***www.kraftwerk.com*** Run by the German technomeisters themselves, and just as obtuse as you'd expect. A strange delight.

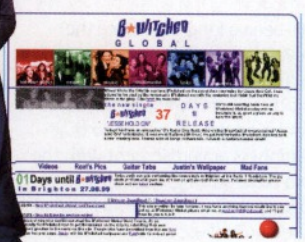
B*witched: not a patch on the old TV series

B*witched Global

www.fortunecity.co.uk/madchester/bigband/61/main.htm ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

The over-the-top adulation of the mildly talented Irish women is enough to make you vomit at times, but the content of the site is superb. The multimedia section offers videos and audio as well as all sorts of goodies to bewitch your computer. Sadly, the music doesn't sound any better when it's played through your browser and there's still no evading that Irish jig that pops up in the middle of *C'est La Vie*.



Girls on top

GIRL BANDS If you think so-called 'girl bands' are strictly for the under-nines, this lot have other ideas

Alisha's Attic

www.alishasattic.freeserve.co.uk

★★★★

AA are one of those bizarre outfits who you can't escape from for a couple of months then disappear for ages before making a comeback just when you thought it was safe to turn your radio back on. Apparently they're recording a song for the new James Bond film, so we can all look forward to another hit to match the classic *I Am, I Feel*.

Bananaramaweb

www.bananaramaweb.com ★★★

Several sections of this site are missing, but anything that offers a full video presentation of the legendary track *Robert De Niro's Waiting* has got to be worth a visit (the lumpiness you notice hereabouts is due to tongues placed very firmly in cheeks). We can't help wondering whether Nathan Jones ever decided to come back, though.

Cleopatra: are you ready for this lot 'comin atcha'?

Cleopatra

www.cleopatramusic.com ★★★

It's always a treat to see 'Cleopatra comin' atcha' – and who could knock a band that formed part of the magnificent Abba Tribute at the Brit Awards? Among such musical nonentitities as Steps and Billie, Cleopatra looked at home. If you can't sleep at night without wondering what the girls have been up to, the diary will ease your worries.

Eternal

www.emirecords.co.uk/eternal/

★★★★

You might think that any band that can manage without the delightful Louise and still be successful must be good friends. But now Kelle has also gone solo and revealed that she didn't get on with her fellow band members, Easther and Vernie Bennet. So if you want to remember Eternal as they were, you'd better visit while you can.

The Official Go-Gos Site

www.gogos.com ★★

How's this for a familiar story? Top girl band splits and redhead singer

there's no better way to buy any CD...

Don't wake me up before you Go-Go

goes on to create solo career... There are a few subtle differences, though. The Go-Gos were actually very good, Belinda Carlisle would run *Circles in the Sand* around Geri Halliwell, and the chances of the neurotic Thatcherite lass ever rejoining the Spices are non-existent – thankfully.

The Official Hepburn Website

www.hepburn.net ★★★

'They're the Shangri-Las with knuckledusters, they're Blondie meets Chrissie Hynde for the Sunny Delight generation.' So it alleges. Alternatively you could sum them up by saying they're crap. The band's hit single *I Quit* had most people with any musical discernment wishing that Hepburn would do just that. But it seems as if they're here to stay, so maybe we'd better get used to it.

L7 – with a verdict on the Spices and TLC

L7

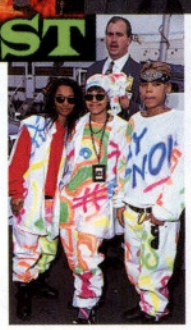
www.smellL7.com ★★★

Stand aside, Scary, Sporty and their limp ilk. If you want attitude, these women have it in abundance. Highlight of the site is the Shit List, a diatribe against people and things that annoy them. Woody Harrelson is described as 'a misogynist nerd who promotes ugly hemp fashions, but couldn't play dead in a cowboy and indian movie'. Reckon his mum's one of the band? By the way, don't miss the Love Advice column – it's essential reading.

Spice Girls

www.virginrecords.com/newspice/ ★★★★

What we want, what we really, really want is for the Spice Girls to disappear back into the murky hole from whence they came and take their marketing man's wet dream of what 'girl power' means with them. Geri's gone, Sporty was a V99 flop, Posh is tucked up with some has-been ball-shuffler and Scary still hasn't found the volume control. We deserve a break.



TLC Fan Mail

www.tlcfanmail.com ★★★★★

Apart from Geldof-Yates offspring, TLC members must have some of the most bizarre names on the planet. T-Boz, Left-Eye and Chilli all have biographies on the site, so you can find out their real names. You might even be lucky enough to bump into them in the chat room. Just remember, 'No scrubs'...

best music sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND OUT ABOUT MP3s?

www.mp3.com
Get started on the official site, with heaps of legal downloads.
mp3.lycos.com
Browse the world of MP3s using a comprehensive search engine.
www.mp3now.com
Vibrant portal for everything MP3.
www.cddb.com
Produces a chart of the top online songs by tracking downloads.

FIND A BAND SITE?

www.ubl.com
Make this the first stop on your quest – for its huge search engine.
www.bigmouth.co.uk
UK-specific site with 100s of links.
www.musicsearch.com
Find sites for artists or music-related services. Efficient & quick.
www.uksounds.com
Innovative new British site with plenty of unsigned talent.

WATCH LIVE CONCERTS OVER THE WEB?

www.liveonthenet.com
Does exactly what its URL suggests.
www.live-online.com
Features a 'modem moshpit' for hearing top bands.
www.mtv.com
The odd exclusive Webcast, as well as plenty of news and fun.
www.virtuetv.com/music/
London-based station transmitting gigs from across the capital.

VIEW THE LATEST NEWS AND REVIEWS?

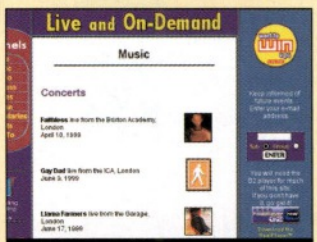
www.rollingstone.com
The US publication, not the rock dinosaurs. Well written and reliable.
www.music365.co.uk
Sensible, enjoyable music features from the people behind Football365.
www.launch.com
New and alternative artists, with profiles and downloads.
www.dotmusic.com
Well-organised British site for all your rock & pop news and links.

FIND GIG LISTINGS?

www.sceneone.co.uk/s1/gigs/
Easy-to-use gig guide from Scene One's entertainment spectacular.
www.tourdates.com
Search for tours around the world.
www.theconcert.co.uk
Searchable live events with links.
www.gigsandtours.com
Find any UK concert – courtesy of SJM Concerts.

BUY TICKETS FOR GIGS?

www.ticketmaster.co.uk
Tickets for any live gig, as well as theatre, classical concerts and more.



Watch gigs at virtuetv.com/music/

www.aloud.com
Relatively new and snazzy site offering a nationwide gig guide.
www.lastminute.com
Excellent bargains on late tickets.
www.ticketzone.co.uk
The biggest events offered online, with links to home pages.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.music.spice-girls
If you know it's what you really, really want...

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Join the All Saints mailing list at ***www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/allsaints***

GET CHATTING?

Check out the iMusic chat rooms at ***www2.imusic.com*** for a variety of popular artists.

Looking for more music sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PICTURES: RETNA, REX

boxman.co.uk
music by mouse

www.vitaminic.co.uk

free!

downloadable music in MP3 format

www.vitaminic.co.uk offers thousands of free tracks, classified in over 150 genres of downloadable music in digital mp3 format, from dance and hip-hop to jazz and world music.

Whatever your taste, you can now interact with your favourite artists, from all over the world, via our newsletters, email and charts. This is the future of the music. So what are you waiting for?

vitaminic

www.vitaminic.co.uk
the music evolution

Charged

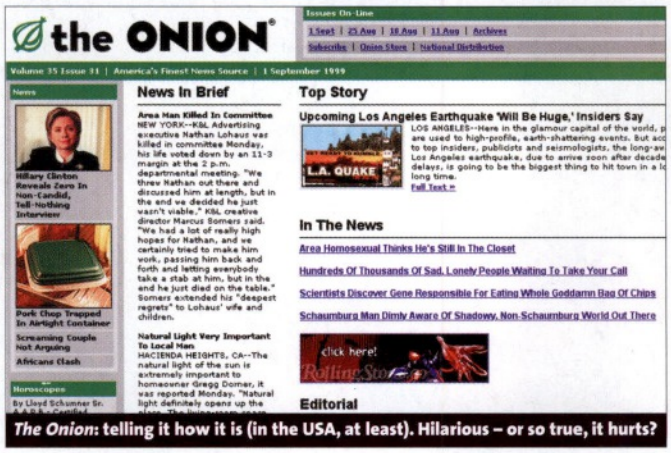
www.charged.com ★★★

Edgy, wacko lifestyle magazine with features on alligator wrestling, camel racing, swimming naked and obscure fetishes. With sections devoted to Action, Adventure and Sin, and a tendency to knob jokes and bad puns, there's something in *Charged* for everyone. Only thing is, why do we get the feeling that most of the readership will be big on tattoos and body piercings?

Feed

www.feed.com ★★★

Feed is basically a daily newspaper, though it's unlikely to end up around someone's fish and chips. With its masthead, lead article and colour news photographs, it mimics the familiar broadsheet format, but there the similarity ends. Each item consists of headline, first two lines and medium of origin, which could be anything from the *Daily Telegraph* to *Africa News* to CNN. You just double-click to get more.


the ONION
Volume 35 Issue 31 | America's Finest News Source | 1 September 1999
News In Brief
Top Story
Upcoming Los Angeles Earthquake 'Will Be Huge,' Insiders Say
In The News
Area Homosexual Thinks He's Still In The Closet
Hundreds Of Thousands Of Sad, Lonely People Waiting To Take Your Call
Scientists Discover Gene Responsible For Eating Whole Goddamn Bag Of Chips
Schaumburg Man Dimly Aware Of Shadowy, Non-Schaumburg World Out There
Editorial

The Onion: telling it how it is (in the USA, at least). Hilarious – or so true, it hurts?

The Onion

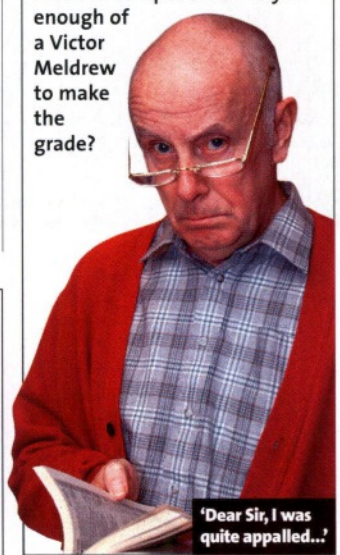
www.theonion.com ★★★★

The Onion's strapline claims that it's 'America's finest news source', and a brief glance at the sober, newspaper-style layout might have you believing it is – for a second or two. As soon as you start to read, though, it becomes apparent that the whole thing's dripping with irony – a lead story on Visa releasing a new Polonium Plus card, a sidebar on the Starship Enterprise crew heroically saving a screen... all played with a gloriously straight bat. You'll soon realise why it's notorious for its biting, spot-on humour.

PROFESSIONAL WHINGEING

Letters pay

The Net is one big soapbox. Wherever you surf, you're being asked to comment here, send rants there, let off steam somewhere else. It's good for the blood pressure; it's also cheap, often contentious, Web site fodder. But there's nothing quite as satisfying as a well-honed Letter to the Editor, eloquently putting him or her right on a few points. Compulsive whingers should check out *www.letterstotheeditor.com*, which lists thousands of magazines and newspapers and has set up email routes straight to them. You can also suss the competition: are you enough of a Victor Meldrew to make the grade?



'Dear Sir, I was quite appalled...'

Stopping the presses

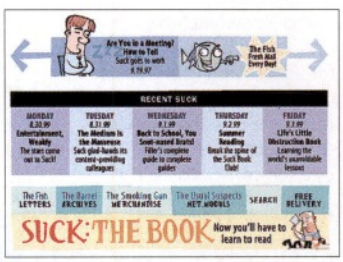
MAGAZINES The new breed of Internet-only magazines has real-life publishers running scared. Pull up a pew at our virtual news-stand and have a browse

Suck

www.suck.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

The subtitle of this gloriously quirky US mag is 'a fish, a barrel and a smoking gun' – which is self-deprecating, really, because not all its objects of derision are easy targets. But it's the kind of engaging banter which typifies *Suck*, where you'll find an eclectic range of both satirical and serious stuff, from a swipe at fat acceptance workshops to an interview with *Blair Witch* co-creator Eduardo Sanchez. A proper magazine which just happens to be on the Internet.



Celebrating the cerebral at *Salon*

Salon

www.salon.com ★★★★

An upmarket, wannabe electronic *Vanity Fair*, but without the show-stopping photography. Updated daily, *Salon* has lowbrow articles by highbrow authors: Camille Paglia on Latino pop sensation Ricky Martin, Garrison Keillor on sexual peccadilloes. Sassy celebrity caricatures and an obsession with Bill Clinton's nether regions give it a distinctly US bent, but there's plenty there for all of us.

WORDS: JIM DAVIES; PICTURES: BBC

Seven: arty, interesting and good to look at – but the writing's not exactly inspired

Seven

www.sevenmag.com ★★★

Seven is an online Aussie music magazine which owes more to *RayGun* than to *Rolling Stone*. The designer is prone to 'arty' doodling over photographs and using upended numbers instead of letters. Gimmicks aside, the writing and photography are passable and the news is up to the minute.

Shark.com

www.shark.com ★★★

If you thought golf was all about dodgy checked trousers and pastel V-necks, think again. Puff Daddy, the Beastie Boys and Alice Cooper are but a few of the music luminaries to get into the swing. With articles on must-have watches, the demise of denim and encounters with alligators on the eighth hole, *Shark* has plenty of bite.

Slate

www.slate.com ★★★

Bill Gates' rather worthy venture into Net publishing is heavily slanted towards US politics and economics, with a smattering of entertainment and arts, à la *Newsweek* or *Time*. It's Web-focused, with an Internet news quiz and an online store that sells, among other things, versatile cigars. Though well considered , it lacks visual flair or sparkle.

State 51

www.state51.co.uk ★★★★

Big on conspiracy theories and alternative lifestyles, the core of *State 51* is a user-maintained 'street level' guide to 500 towns in the UK. Called 'Knowhere', this tips you off on such matters as the best ramps for skateboarding and where to catch the hottest DJs. Impressive music reviews and ultra-cool contributors are slightly let down by a self-conscious look.

State 51: speaking to the kids (man...)

Word

www.word.com ★★★★

Imagine getting all your friends to write articles on whatever happened to take their fancy... Most likely there'd be pieces on Billy Joel obsessions and falling in love with an ex-hooker. It would, in fact, be like *Word*, a scratchy, eclectic mag which uses torn paper and mussed-up writing where most sites would use slick moves.

best news sites ★★★★★

where can I...

RECEIVE NEWS?

www.guardianunlimited.co.uk

One of the UK's most innovative and useable news sites.

pa.press.net

A vast array of news-related services, including a desktop ticker and diary.

FIND LOCAL NEWS?

www.thisis.co.uk

Add the name of your city or county (e.g. www.thisisessex.co.uk) to get news, chat and events near you.

www.ecola.com/news/press/eu/uk/

Directory of online UK regional newspapers and magazines.

GET AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE?

www.reuters.com/news/

The massive news agency provides rolling headlines and news by topic.

www.cnn.com

From the channel of the same name comes a comprehensive service with plenty of audio and video.

Unlimited online news at *The Guardian*

COMPILE MY OWN NEWS PAGES?

www.crayon.net

Aka 'Create Your Own Newspaper'. Build a daily digest of headlines.

my.yahoo.com

Personalise a Yahoo! page to get the news you want when you want it.

GET A DIFFERENT SPIN?

www.drudgereport.com

Notorious American columnists who broke the Clinton scandal – and a lot more besides.

www.thesmokinggun.com

Material from US government and law enforcement sources – quirky.

FIND WEATHER & TRAVEL?

www.wunderground.com

Current conditions and a forecast for any location, anywhere, in colour.

www.theaa.co.uk/motoring/ukroads/traffic.asp

Roadworks, road closures and delays all over the country.

JOIN A NEWSGROUP?

uk.media

Vent your spleen on the media here.

FIND A MAILING LIST?

Try ITN News on Demand. Go to ***www.itn.co.uk/desktopnews/webpage/preferences.htm*** and send your email address to get daily news updates.

GET CHATTING?

www.guardianunlimited.co.uk

A wide range of bulletin boards.

GET MORE FREE NOW WITH TOTALISE

The 'users' free ISP has joined forces with thenet to offer all readers a rewarding opportunity to get a taste of rapid access to the Internet.

www.totalise.net

offers all readers of thenet a massive extra handout of Totalise shares when they register and use their service. It's so simple - use Totalise and part-own the company!!!! (No catch)

thenet share offer = 50 shares for registering PLUS 300 shares for using the service

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Just visit the site to see what's on offer:

- Real tradeable shares (average of 3,500 available for each user over a 2 year period)
- 0800 freephone support line
- Choice of POP3 and IMAP4 web based email for communication on the move
- Free OPERA software browser option
- OWS look-up engine (a totally alternative way of finding what you are looking for on the web)

For your extra shares, just put thenet in the 'Recommendations' box when you register .... and wait for your reward!

Make sure you don't miss out - thousands of shares have already been issued.
This offer closes 30 November 1999.

TOTALISE

The users ISP

www.totalise.net

* See www.totalise.net for full offer details. This advertisement and those on pages 11 and 12 which has been issued by Totalise plc, The Four Arches, Broughton Hall Business Park, Skipton BD23 3AE, have been approved solely for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act, 1986 by Baker Tilly, Chartered Accountants, 2 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3ST who are authorised to carry on Investment Business by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. The directors of Totalise plc accept responsibility for the contents of these advertisements.

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It's a sure thing

RACING If you thought the Tote was a posh art gallery, use the Net to turn yourself into a champion gambler and racing expert

Racing Post Online

www.racingpost.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

From the bible of British racing comes the mother of all racing Web sites. Fancy yourself as a serious punter? If you can't beat the bookies with the swathes of information available here, it's time to hang up your chequebook. Much of the content is subscription-only, but it's worth it. You get the entire paper, plus a live results service, reports from trainers' yards, a cuttings library and databases of every equine statistic you can think of. Our favourite.

Breeder's Cup

www.breederscup.com ★★★

It's billed as the richest day in sport and, outside of the next Holyfield fight and Roy Keane's weekly pay-day, it probably is. The annual Breeder's Cup meeting, to be run in Florida on 6 November, offers a total prize pool of $12 million for a single day's racing. Of that, $4m rides on one race. There's still time to get your sister out of pony club, feed her nag some steroids and ship them across the pond.

British Horse Racing Systems

www.cse.dmu.ac.uk/~bis96jl/systems ★★★

Ever met a broke bookie? No? This may be why. From one page you can access 23 different betting systems, each an arcane, almost mystical way of identifying the day's winners. With names like The Assassin, the Brown Jack and the Chevy Chase, they're interesting to read but deadly to follow.

Channel 4 Racing

www.channel4.com/sport/racing_c4 ★★★★

Yes, you too can dress like John McCririck with Channel 4 Racing's exclusive line of branded apparel. But if capes and deerstalkers are not your style, there's plenty of well-written, witty content aimed at helping novice racegoers make sense of it all. There are biographies of jockeys and trainers, and an innocent's guide to betting. Looks slick, like all C4's sites.

Dubai World Cup

www.dubaiworldcup.com ★★

Horse racing doesn't get any more dramatic. Each year the top-rated racehorses from around the world converge on Dubai for the World Cup. The race is run under spotlights around a 10-furlong sand course, and the winner trousers $3 million for just a couple of minutes' work. So racing's boring, is it?

Douglas Herd-inspired hattery

ESPN Horse Racing

www.espn.go.com/horse ★★★

The CNN of sport, ESPN's site is suitably impressive. The horse section is your first stop for US racing news and is marked out by some fine writing, photography and in-depth features, along with a results service. Everything seems more glamorous over there, doesn't it?

Famous Racehorses

www-users.york.ac.uk/~sjp22/index ★★★

Comprehensive – if slightly anoraky – site devoted to the most successful British racehorses of recent years, with full histories, stats and pictures. Still no sign of Shergar, though. The author has also built a fan site for TV's muttonchop madman, John McCririck, and a good set of links to racing and betting sites.

Irish Racing

www.irish-racing.com ★★★★

Major players in the British and Irish racing scenes are interchangeable, and you can bet on Irish races with British bookies. The main difference is that Irish meetings are less stuffy and a lot more raucous. This truly comprehensive site is your guide to racing 'across the water', with news, previews, live results and betting.

Racing Phrasebook

www.bhb.co.uk/phrasebook.html ★★★

Can't tell a monkey from a yankee?

DIARY 7-10 Golf, Alfred Dunhill Cup, St Andrew's 17 October & 31 October Formula One Racing Championship deciders,

You need the British Horse Racing Board's Racing Phrasebook to make sense of paddock patter. And if you're short of stature or flush with cash there's advice on becoming a jockey or an owner.

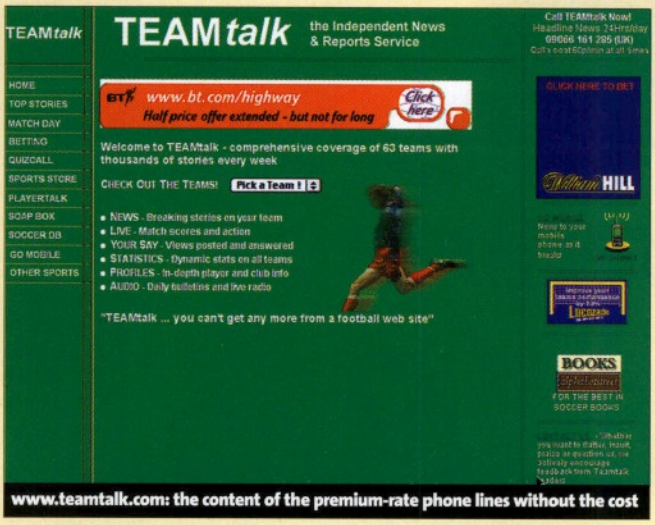
The Tote

www.tote.co.uk ★★★

The Tote is a racing-only alternative betting system. When you lose, you can comfort yourself with the fact that your cash goes to other, luckier punters, and not into the pockets of a bookie. This site explains all and offers live prices.

best sport sites ★★★★★

where can I...


TEAMtalk
the Independent News & Reports Service
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MATCH DAY
BETTING
QUIZCALL
SPORTS STORE
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Click here
Welcome to TEAMtalk - comprehensive coverage of 60 teams with thousands of stories every week
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Pick a Team !
• NEWS - Breaking stories on your team
• LIVE - Match scores and action
• YOUR SAY - Views posted and answered
• STATISTICS - Dynamic stats on all teams
• PROFILES - In-depth player and club info
• AUDIO - Daily bulletins and live radio
"TEAMtalk ... you can't get any more from a football web site"
William HILL
BOOKS

www.teamtalk.com: the content of the premium-rate phone lines without the cost

FIND THE LATEST NEWS AND SCORES?

espn.go.com
Fast scores from every sport, plus news with an American bias.

www.eurosport.com
As wide-ranging and useable as the satellite channel of the same name. Obscure sports are a speciality.

www.soccernet.com
Score flashes from all UK games, plus a newswire.

www.sporting-life.com
News, scores and betting advice from the paper of the same name.

FIND TOP FOOTBALL SITES?

www.football365.co.uk
Exciting, fast-improving daily paper with offbeat news and humour. Customised emails available.

www.footballnews.co.uk
Plenty of stats, plus a database of players and the latest headlines.

www.teamtalk.com
Premium-rate phone lines for your club are transferred to the Net – and they don't cost a penny.

www.e-soccer.com
Links list for every English and Scottish league, plus non-league clubs and European action.

Fancy a flutter? Go to inter-bet.com

FOLLOW THE RUGBY WORLD CUP?

www.scrum.com
Rugby portal, with hundreds of links and a thorough news service.

www.rfu.com
Official English rugby site. The best place to follow the national team.

www.rwc99.com
The tournament's official site promises chats with the stars.

www.rugby365.co.uk
Will 365 do for rugby what they've done for football? The World Cup will be a good way to find out.

FIND FIXTURES?

www.sportcal.co.uk/public/online.htm
Events and sponsors for five years.

www.pa.press.net/sport/calendar/
PA guide to the whole sporting year.

www.sportlive.net
Join the *Express* site for your own email sports diary.

www.digitaldiscounts.com/sports.html
Unexciting but extremely informative fixture guide.

FOLLOW EVENTS LIVE?

www.planetfootball.com
Hub site for English football clubs' RealAudio broadcasts.

www.lsmsports.com/fight.htm
The world's biggest boxing bouts online. Packs a punch.

www.broadcast.com/sports/soccer
From Derby County to the Jamaican national side in glorious RealAudio.

www.golfboxx.com
Every major tour event in RealAudio, plus an interactive 'Golf Doctor'.

PLACE AN ONLINE BET?

www.igindex.co.uk/sport.htm
Fixed-odds and spread betting, with live price updates.

www.williamhill.co.uk
Get British bookies' odds and place bets online. Reliable and popular.

www.bluesq.com
Register for user-friendly betting.

www.inter-bet.com
One of the oldest, most popular Net bookies. Easy to use and competitive.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.sport.horseracing
Lots of expert punters, and they're surprisingly happy to share tips.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Follow the racing scene all across Europe from ***www.findmail.com/list/european-horseracing/***

GET CHATTING?

www.winning-post.com
National Hunt events, including the Cheltenham Gold Cup.

Looking for more sport sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: BEN OLIVER; PICTURES: ALLSPORT

LEARN THE RACING LINGO

From the horse's mouth

That'll be a Yankee, then

PONY A £25 bet – not to be confused with one of the four-legged things.

MONKEY A £500 bet; a good way to go bankrupt fast.

JOLLY The favourite in a race, and thus the one horse guaranteed not to win you money.

YANKEE Complex accumulator bet involving 11 separate wagers in four different races. Hence, 'I'll have a Yankee for a monkey on the jollies, please!' Suddenly it all becomes clear.

BACKWARD Sounds like a horse that runs in reverse but actually describes a nag needing time to mature. Either way, don't back it.

From ***www.bhb.co.uk/phrasebook.html***

Kuala Lumpur and Suzuka 6 November Breeders' Cup, Florida 6 November Rugby Union World Cup Final kicks off in Cardiff

www.sportlive.net

BLUE
SQ.
online betting
"if you're
talking bookies
i take the mouse
not the man"
click into the excitement of
live internet betting at
www.bluesq.com
and leave
the old-style bookies behind.
Over 18s only. Rules apply – available on request at
www.bluesq.com

Legs eleven

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Avoiding jokes about post-match baths, we trawl the best women's football Web sites

You should see what happens when they win

Michelle Akers' Soccer Page

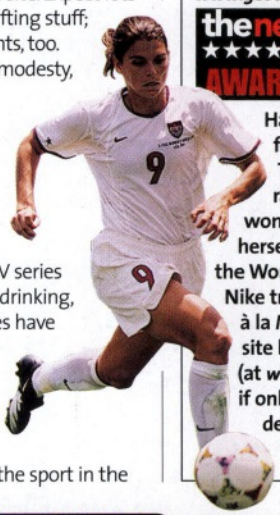
www.michelleakers.com ★★★

'Who is she?' you might well ask. Michelle Akers is the next best thing to Mia Hamm (see separate entry); a sort of female Paul Merson, whose recovery from personal disaster (in her case chronic fatigue syndrome) to become an international star is documented in full on her own personalised official site. Expect lots of inspirational, uplifting stuff; training tips and hints, too. Not a great deal of modesty, it has to be said.

Doncaster Belles Home Page

www.donny.co.uk/Belles/ ★★★★

Immortalised in a TV series and book, the hard-drinking, all-conquering Belles have become the public face of women's football in this country. They also muster the only half-decent site on the sport in the UK, with player profiles, results, fixtures and chat, as well as a page on the England team, which the Belles often supply half a side's worth of players to. Why didn't the FA think of that?



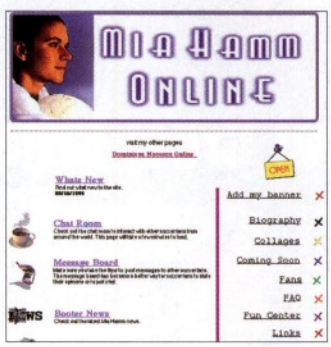
Mia Hamm Online

www.geocities.com/Colosseum/Slope/1834/miahamm.html

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

★★★★

'Women should be in the discotheque or the boutique, but not in football,' Ron Atkinson once opined. Let's hope that Big Ron never runs into Mia Hamm, the world's first female soccer superstar. The US captain has raised the profile of the women's game, earned herself a fortune, helped lift the World Cup and even has a Nike trainer named after her, à la Michael Jordan. This site beats her official one (at *www.miafoundation.org*) if only by virtue of its detailed biography and pic sections.



Women's Soccer World

www.womensoccer.com ★★★

The closest thing the women's game has to a central home, focusing on the sport's hotspots: the US, Scandinavia and China. With links, product reviews and individual team pages, this is both useable and complete, and avoids much of the US bias of other sites. Now, where's that soap?

WOMENS SOCCER WORLD Online

best sport sites ★★★★★ where can I...

FIND SITES FOR FEMALE SPORTS STARS?

hingis.and.kournikova.8m.com

Take two tennis beauties into the shower? Yep – Anna Kournikova and Martina Hingis, to be specific.

come.to/denise_lewis

Everything you could possibly be interested in finding out about the heptathlete extraordinaire.

FIND GENERAL WOMEN'S SPORT SITES?

fiat.gslis.utexas.edu/~lewisa/womsprt.html

Huge guide to women's and girls' sport links, arranged in categories.

www.indygirl.com

For women with a passion for extreme and endurance sports, particularly of the bungee jumping and surfing varieties.

FIND SPECIFIC WOMEN'S SPORTS?

www.webbsoc.demon.co.uk

'A salute to women's cricket'. At least the English women are a bit better than the men.

www.womensboxingworld.com

Find out about the female branch of the noble art and read profiles of top women boxers here.

FIND WOMEN'S SPORT MAGAZINES?

www.sportsforwomen.com

News and chat from around the planet, plus a store offering sports equipment.

Read women's *Sports Illustrated* at cnnsi.com/siforwomen

cnnsi.com/siforwomen/

American mag *Sports Illustrated*'s female-oriented edition. Don't expect a swimwear issue...

JOIN A WOMEN'S SPORT ASSOCIATION?

www.wsf.org.uk

UK body providing help in finding teams and news on women's sport.

www.WomensSportsFoundation.org

Campaigns for equality in sport, as well as providing regular news and event updates.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Want to know where to go to subscribe to a list offering regular discussion of women's football matches and stars? Give ***www.hightechsoccer.com*** a try.

GET CHATTING?

Michelle Akers regularly participates in a number of chat sessions on sports channels. Get details from ***www.michelleakers.com***

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: ALLSPORT

DIARY **16 October Women's Football International, European Championship Qualifier: Switzerland v England Ladies**

www.hightechsoccer.com

The Ski Club of Great Britain

www.skiclub.co.uk ★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Most Brit skiers are used to seeing the SCGB as snobbish, stuffy and irrelevant – for old farts only. But if this slick, information-packed site is anything to go by, there's been an infusion of fresh blood. No matter where you ski or what your experience level, there's something for you here. Snow reports, news, advice, holidays, savings, diary, links... plus, of course, plentiful reminders of the benefits of Ski Club membership. Totally professional.

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PICTURES: REX

Taking the piste

WINTER BREAKS The holiday season is going downhill, so do away with your bikini and grab your snowboard

Eddie: cool

Ski Chalets

www.skichalets.co.uk ★★★

If you've got a rough idea of what type of holiday you want, then the simple eight-question search facility here will be a boon. Fill in what you want in terms of destination, accommodation, travel details and budget and before you know it you get an email back with an offer.

Ski.co.uk

www.ski.co.uk ★★★★

Nothing more than a simple, stylishly designed page of great links that will take you to relevant sites for whatever you require from your holiday. The links are effectively split up into various categories and are even rated so you know what to expect. If you are looking for holiday searching for a winter sports holiday this is a good place to start. Various search facilities help you choose a destination and find a suitable deal. You can apply for a huge range of work you can advertise on the site.

Skiers Travel Bureau

www.skiers-travel.co.uk

★★★

If you need a little bit of advice when you're

DIARY **13-18 October** Frankfurt Book Fair, Germany **23 October** International Gay Rodeo, Phoenix, Arizona, USA

www.eventsworldwide.com

brochures and ask the experts for help finding your ideal holiday.

Bobsleigh? No way

Skiers World

www.skiersworld.com ★★★

Skiers World offers holidays in North America and Europe. The company specialises in school skiing trips – so watch out if you don't want to mix with crowds of brats – but unlike some similar firms it offers top-class resorts, not second-rate backwaters. There's no complete online booking service – you need to make a phone call as well to confirm availability – but if you're prepared to make that small sacrifice it's well worth it.

TheAlps

www.thealps.com ★★★★

This is a Swedish site, with English-, French- and German-language versions. Despite the name, it covers mountain ranges throughout Europe (even Scotland), and in New Zealand as well. Comprehensive resort information, weather reports and advice for all levels of skiers and boarders make this a highly useful destination for anyone planning a winter sports holiday.

best travel sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND THE BEST HOLIDAY AND FLIGHT DEALS?

www.a2btravel.com

Britain's biggest travel site, with booking facility and special offers.

expedia.co.uk

Microsoft's free-to-use travel resource with flights and deals.

www.travelocity.com

An essential, all-round bookmark for the DIY traveller.

SPEND A DAY OUT IN BRITAIN?

www.virgin.net/daysout

Those nice people at Virgin tell you exactly where to go.

www.SmoothHound.co.uk

Guide to days out in the UK, plus travel and hotel info.

www.LondonTown.com/index2.html

This guide to the capital comes highly recommended.

GET DESTINATION INFORMATION?

www.Travel-Library.com

Resources and links for any country.

www.vtourist.com

Talk to fellow tourists before you set off, or use the directory for more info.

FIND BUSINESS TRAVEL ADVICE AND HELP?

www.thetrip.com

Look up flights, hotels, car hire firms and more – you'll find everything for the business traveller.

Expedia can take care of all your travel booking needs

www.business-travel.co.uk

Another site providing a wealth of business travel information.

www.equator-net.co.uk

Useful portal for business travel, with plenty of advice

GET DOS AND DON'TS?

www.tips4trips.com

A vast database of 1000 'tips for trips' posted on a message board by fellow travellers.

www.doctor-travel.com

Take a travel tour, aimed at shedding the hassle of leaving the country.

FIND CHEAP ROUTES?

www.netos.com/uct/

Good for finding work abroad, and for visas and flights.

www.lonelyplanet.com

A great site dedicated to budget backpacking.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.skiing.alpine

Advice on buying equipment, finding the best resorts and looking cool on the slopes.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Join the pack at the Internet Travel Network list. Put 'subscribe' in the message and send it to ***listserv@sunnyside.com.***

GET CHATTING?

chat.tiscover.com

Popular chat site for all aspects of skiing and winter sports.

Looking for more travel sites? Turn to Need to Know on page 108

LUXURY WINTER SPORTS HOLIDAY COMPETITION

Have a great American skiing holiday – on us!

If all the talk of skiing, boarding and the fun of the après scene has whetted your appetite and sparked some lust for the slopes, we've got a great competition for you.

Together with the *Daily Mail* Ski and Snowboard Show and Ski 93, *the net* is offering you the chance to win a fabulous skiing holiday for two, at the Bretton Woods luxury resort in New Hampshire's beautiful White Mountains.

The first prize: An all-inclusive holiday for two lucky people for one heavenly week in the Bretton Woods Mountain Resort in New Hampshire's White Mountains, courtesy of Ski 93. For further information on Ski 93, call the hotline on 0800 969 394. You will fly to Boston courtesy of Icelandair (020-7874 1000) where transport will be arranged to take you to The Mount Washington hotel and resort. Accommodation includes breakfast and evening meal, and ski hire will also be supplied.

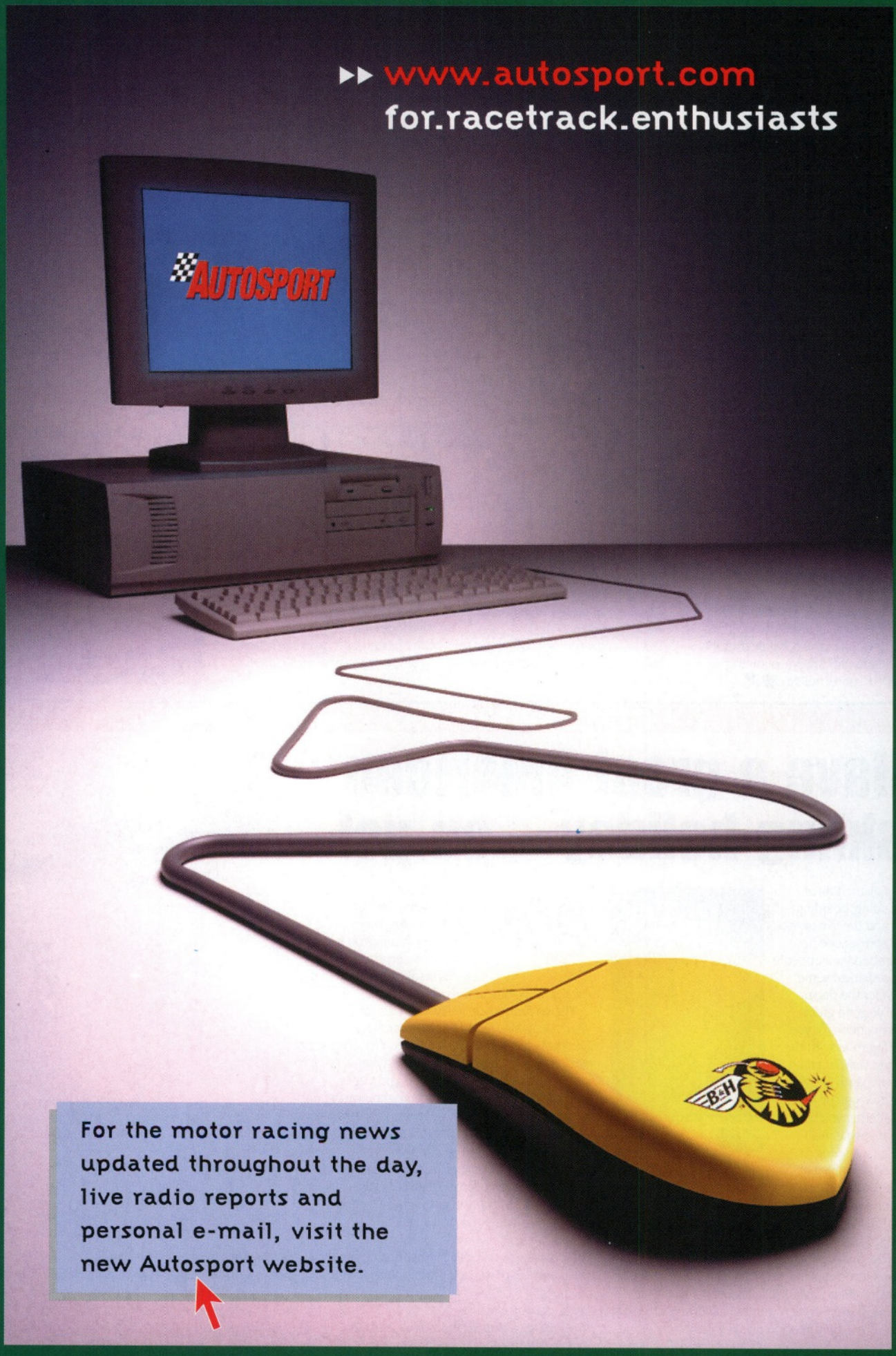
The 50 runners-up will win tickets for this year's *Daily Mail* Ski and Snowboard Show. The show has a host of attractions including a Virtual Reality Mountain, Live Freestyling Frenzy, après-ski bars, cybercafe, Snowboard Virgins Slope and hundreds of exhibitors showcasing the best in winter holidays, fashions and accessories.

Don't miss the *Daily Mail* Ski and Snowboard Show, which will be at Birmingham's NEC from 15-17 October and London's Olympia from 29 October to 7 November. Beat the rush and pre-order tickets for the event on the special hotline number: 0990 900090.

For a chance to win this fantastic prize, simply tell us: which US state is Bretton Woods in?

Send your answers to:
***the net/Daily Mail* Ski Promotion, Hub TM, Axe and Bottle Court, London SE1 1YT**

Prizewinners will be chosen from all correct entries received by 22 October. Winners will be notified within two weeks of closing date. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Information on winners will be available within two weeks of closing date and will be supplied on receipt of an SAE.

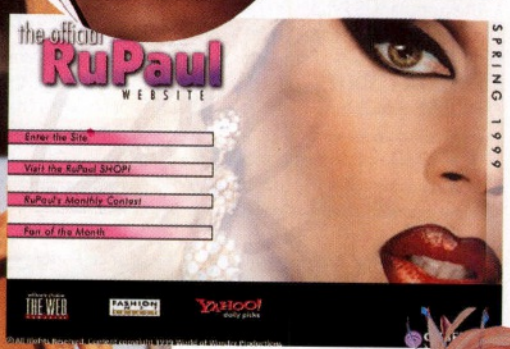

▸▸ www.autosport.com
for.racetrack.enthusiasts
AUTOSPORT
For the motor racing news updated throughout the day, live radio reports and personal e-mail, visit the new Autosport website.

RuPaul

www.rupaul.net ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD **RuPaul is massive in America, and this site caters admirably for her hordes of adoring fans. Unsurprisingly, it's covered in copious quantities of hot pink, with pictures of pouting lips strewn liberally around. There's an extensive gallery, a shop selling Ru T-shirts and posters, plenty of chances to email your opinion, and the unmissable opportunity to become 'Fan of the Month' (as had the rather frightening 'Wayne' when we visited). The best bit, though, is the helpful hint section, which tells how to have a face à la the 6ft 7in Ru: by chanting the mantra 'I have beautiful lips' into a mirror, it would appear. Enchanting.**

RuPaul: she's really a bloke, if the rumours are true



The man behind every good woman

DRAG ACTS What do you mean it's not natural for men to make a career out of dressing up like women? Just try telling this lot...

Boy George

www.boy.george.net ★★★★★

The 1980s were created just so that grown men could prance around in frilly shirts and wear copious amounts of make-up without being ostracised. One who made the most of this opportunity was Boy George. This site celebrates all that is great, gorgeous and garish about him: bang-to-date news and juicy info on forthcoming tours, weekly columns by the man himself and photos of the extravagant interior of his house. Fans will adore it.

Dame Edna

www.dame-edna.com ★★★

The joint site of Dame Edna and alter-ego Barry Humphries. Information on the bespectacled goddess is a touch thin on the ground – much here is plugging books and appearances – so dedicated fans may come away frustrated, but what is there is amusing. Best for a chuckle is the Dame Edna healing page, where you are invited to press afflicted parts against the computer screen.

Eddie (right) and Edna: what a beautiful couple...

Danny la Rue

www.dannylarue.com ★★★

A reasonably extensive site with a biography, links and a few pics of the man Bob Hope once referred to as 'the most glamorous woman in the world'. There's also news of a forthcoming tour, and the chance to buy the latest album, *I Am What I Am*. Fair enough.

David Michaels

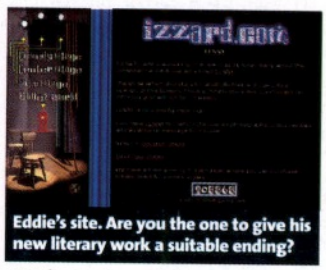
www.davidmichaels.com ★★

David Michaels' site is unusual, as it has photos of him as a man as well as a laydee. He makes a convincing woman, though: according to the site, he's been in *Cybill* and an episode of *Roseanne* that was so controversial that the 'normal time slot had to be changed to a later one'. Check out the Diana Ross lookalike pictures – uncannily like the singer herself.

Eddie Izzard

www.izzard.com ★★★★★

The quality of the Web site of the most imaginative cross-dressing comedian in the world is enough to put those of most other celebs to shame. Funkily designed, it's got regular tour and show updates, a gallery of typically deadpan photos and an impressive amount of input from the droll one himself. There's even the once-in-a-lifetime chance to complete Eddie's book for him – and the best ending (chosen by Izzard) gets published on the site.



Eddie's site. Are you the one to give his new literary work a suitable ending?

Frank Marino

www.frankmarino.com ★★★

Frank Marino isn't well known on this side of the pond, but apparently he's 'Queen of Las Vegas', which would explain why he's made numerous cover-girl appearances on magazines such as *Transformation* and

National Enquirer. And, we learn, he has 2000 costumes. Fascinating. Visit the shop for the latest line of Frank Marino t-shirts, a snip at $15.

Kenny Everett

www.netcomuk.co.uk/~timsl/everettweb/index.html ★★★★

Kenny Everett always had a bit of a penchant for dressing up as a woman: his creations included a take-off of fellow drag artists Hinge and Bracket, and the dubiously named Cupid Stunt. This beautifully designed site celebrates his comedy track record, with audio clips from his numerous radio broadcasts, video of his most famous sketches, and a timeline of his career, right up to his death in 1995.

Lizzian's World

www.lizian.freeserve.co.uk/tv/ ★★★★★

An outstanding UK husband and wife site for anyone for whom cross-dressing represents less of a living and more a way of life. You're offered heaps of information on make-up, clothes buying and skin care; there's also a considerable amount of advice and help for partners of TVs from women with similar experience. The overriding – and worthy – theme is simply that 'you are not alone'.

best celebrity sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND GOOD GOSSIP?

www.mrshowbiz.com
Don't bother reading celebrity gossip columns in newspapers; Mr Showbiz gets there first.

www.bezerk.com
A lengthy list of awards, news and information on celebrities.

www.goldi.com
A weekly update of the best (and the worst) celebrity gossip around.

www.edrive.com
Lots of gossip here, too, with reviews, features and extensive links to other star-studded sites.

READ MAGAZINES?

www.etonline.com
Get in touch with the worlds of music, TV, film and video.

www.tvgen.com
A vast American TV magazine with readable articles.

www.AutographCollector.com
That's right – an entire magazine devoted to autographs.

www.people.com
The popular US *People* magazine is always an interesting read.

FIND CELEBRITY HOME PAGES?

www.celebsites.com
Links to official sites of celebs from all walks of fame and fortune.

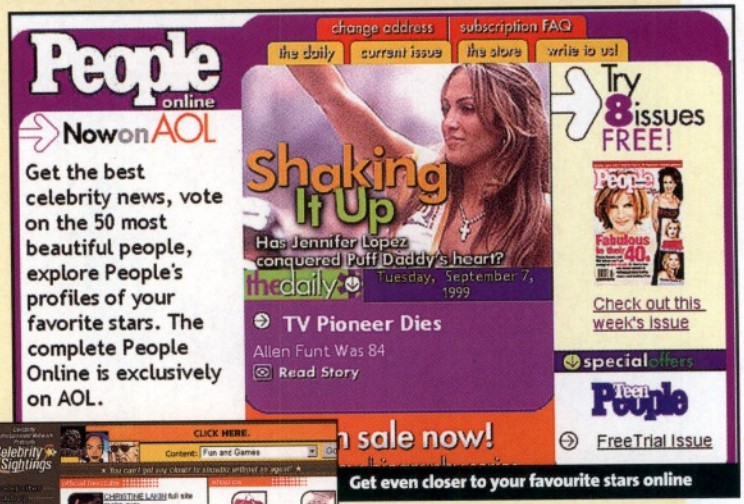
www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Set/1150/
Celebrity Archives will link you to the famous person of your choice.

mw.simplenet.com/webring/index.html
Home of the fabled Celebrity Web Ring, a massive list of sites.

www.celebritysightings.com
Not what you might think – it's a big list of celebrity sites.

FIND A STAR'S ADDRESS?

www.thezone.pair.com/email
Not just for celebrity emails; addresses are available, too.



Get even closer to your favourite stars online

www.celebrityemail.com
Over 14,000 celebs, ranging from supermodels to princes. Send email to the site and it will forward your missive to the adored one .

www3.islandnet.com/~luree/howto.html
Tips and tricks for tracking down your celebrity of choice.

members.aol.com/RIPOKICKS/index8.html
All AOL-listed celebrities, from Douglas Adams to the Zoo People.

MEET MY HERO?

www.yack.com
Check here for an updated list of current celebrity events.

chat.beeb.com
Stars from BBC programmes sometimes drop in for chats just after their shows.

chat.yahoo.com
Comprehensive round-up of who's doing chat sessions.

www.virgin.net
Worth keeping an eye on for the odd megastar guest.

BUY CELEBRITY ITEMS?

www.women-celebrities.com/celebritymall/celebritymall.html
Celebrity merchandise, posters, videos, books and calendars.

celebrityconnection.com/index.html
Buys and sells autographs, memorabilia, props and wardrobes.

www.csn.net/petrelle/mitchell.htm
Old-time autographs from some of the Hollywood greats.

www.autographs-etc.com
Buy autographs, including those of John Travolta and Gillian Anderson.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.support.crossdressing
Need a helping hand to make the change? You'll find it here.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Send an email marked 'info' to ***efoley@tiac.net*** to discuss Celebrity Death Pools – and find out which famous face might croak next.

GET CHATTING?

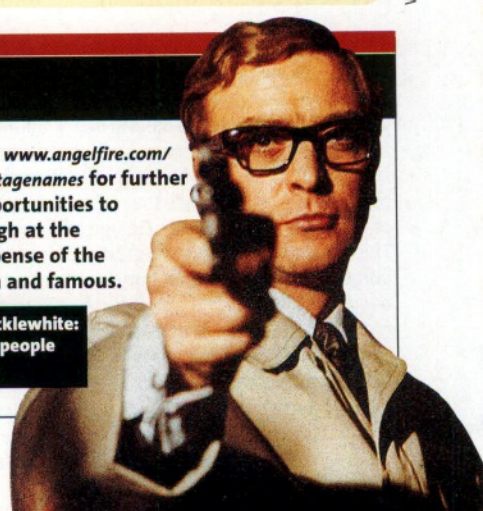
www.celebritypalace.com
Discuss anything celeb-related.

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY

STARS' REAL NAMES

William Pratt – the name of the beast

One of the more satisfying aspects of being a celebrity must be that you can justifiably exchange the boring name that your loving parents dumped on you at birth for a more appealing one. Those celebs who have chosen to do so will be less than delighted to know that there are plenty of sites telling the world exactly what their embarrassing handles used to be. Take, for example, Celebrity Almanac (*celebrity almanac.com/real.html*), which has a list of hundreds. For some, it's obvious why they chose to leave their old names behind. Would Boris Karloff have been so scary if he had used his real name – William Pratt? Could Michael Caine have become such a movie icon if he'd stuck with Maurice Micklewhite? Why didn't Tom Cruise choose to stay with his full name: the glorious Thomas Cruise Mapother IV? We demand to know. Meanwhile, check out *www.angelfire.com/la/stagenames* for further opportunities to laugh at the expense of the rich and famous.


Maurice Micklewhite: not a lot of people know that

FREAKED OUT AT THE COST OF CD'S?

You've clubbed to it.

You've screamed in the car to it.

You've got to have it.

But the cost!

It's a killer if you pay High St. prices. But at qxl.com online auctions, you pay the price you want! Bid on thousands of new and used cd's, vinyl, tapes, pc games, tickets, videos and books at qxl.com. Get a fantastic deal, whatever music you freak out to!

DON'T BUY OR SELL UNTIL YOU QXL

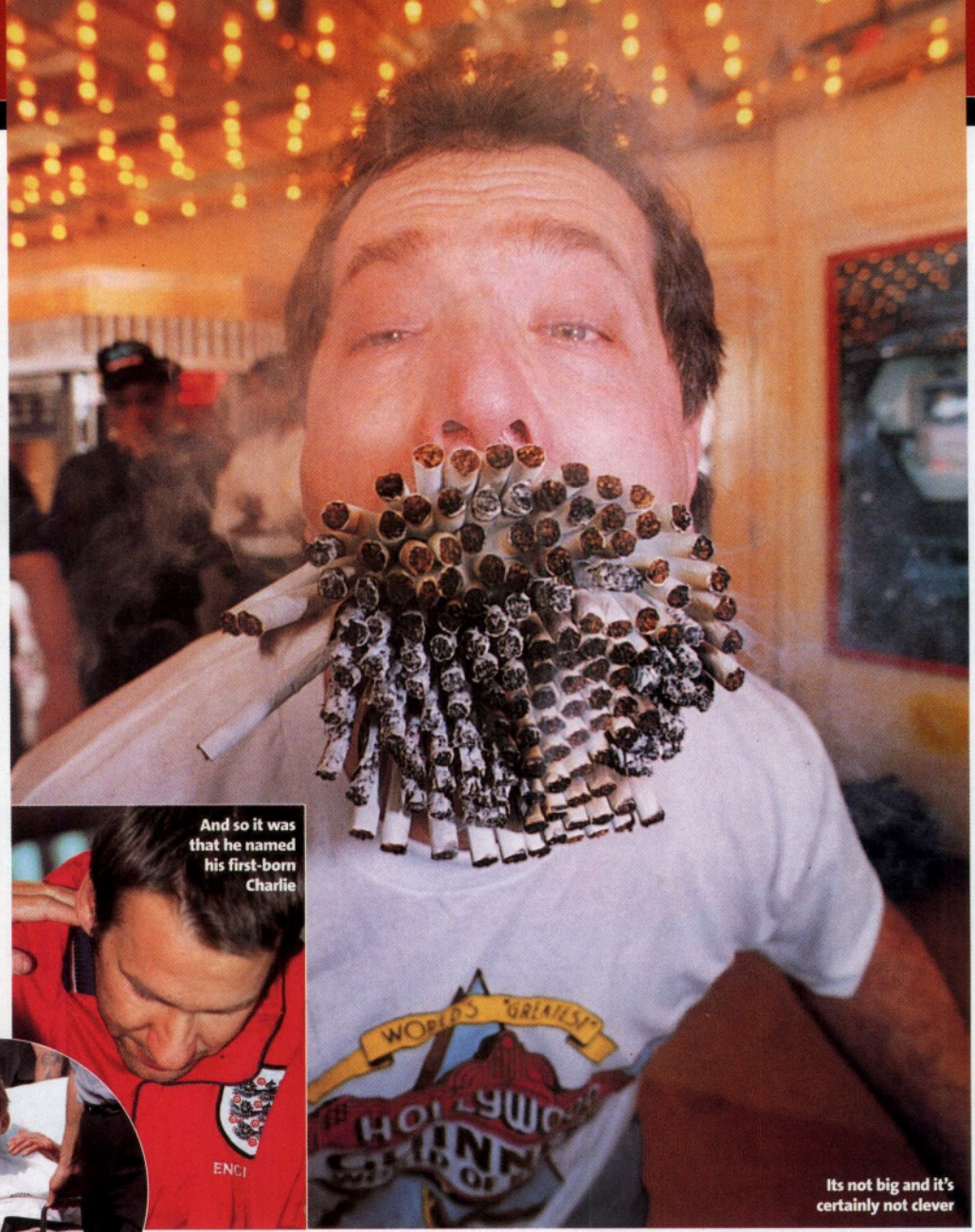
Auctions at

QXL.com

Click on www.qxl.com now!

I just can't get enough

ADDICTION No matter what you're hooked on, the Net can help you kick it – or so they say



Its not big and it's certainly not clever

And so it was that he named his first-born Charlie

'A livener, please, barman'

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

★★★

The first stopping point for sozzled surfers everywhere, AA offers a simple online quiz to diagnose your drinking problem, links to meetings and members worldwide, and plenty of general helpful advice. All very non-confrontational. For something with a harder, more personal edge, try ***www.alcoholismtreatment.org***, which has a print-out Q&A with questions such as: 'Whose lives did you risk while you were drunk? Make a list here.'

Anonymous One

www.anonymousone.com ★★★

There's nothing like a serious addiction to put the fear of God into someone. This site bridges the gap between rehab and religion with Christian affirmations and recovery tales, plus a worldwide database of links and self-test guides to drugs (both alcohol and the illegal ones), sex and gambling addictions.

The Beanie Addiction Story Book

members.tripod.com/~BrittneyAnne/bbstories.html ★★★★

Twelve-year-old Britney Anne got hooked on Beanie Babies (the tacky cuddly toys) when her sister gave her one for Christmas. She now has a Baby-a-week habit. Soon she'll have moved on to Teletubbies to get her highs. Where will it end? Chasing Puff the Magic Dragon, probably.

Don't Smoke.com

www.dontsmoke.com ★★★★

Fervent puritanical haranguing from the Yanks. 'Your family and your animals will love you for being a quitter,' cajoles this extensive anti-smoking site, which mixes useful advice and links with the plain vomit-inducing. Check out ***www.nicotinell.co.uk***, too, which will email you reminders on not lighting up and dump a character on your desktop to discourage you.

Betty Ford Clinic

www.bettyfordcenter.org

★★★

As 'a recovering alcoholic woman', Betty knows first-hand 'how the disease of alcoholism and drug addiction can affect the lives of... loved ones'. She's so concerned, she's even set up a clinic to help (at $13,000 a month). If you have the problems but not the dollars, the site's as far as you'll get.

Gamblers Anonymous

www.gamblersanonymous.org ★★

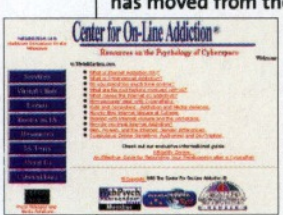
Can't pass a bookie's without nipping inside for a quick one? Find yourself heavily in debt after

Center for On-Line Addiction

netaddiction.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Imagine holding an AA meeting in the saloon bar of your local. Or greeting punters at Gamblers Anonymous with a red-hot tip for the 3.30 at Newmarket. Daft, of course. So why is there a Web site for Internet addicts? That paradox aside, *netaddiction.com* has a real message: if your Web usage has moved from the recreational to the obsessional, you're in trouble. Fortunately, you can opt for one-to-one chat with counsellors to help you sort that one out.



INTERNET ADDICTION

Caught in the Web

'Not again, Mr Blair...'

When do you become a Web addict? Opinions on reasonable usage vary but 'experts' are currently claiming that four hours a day online may constitute over-use and any more could point to addiction. Symptoms of Web dependency include headaches, sore fingers and dry eyes, as well as missed appointments, lack of sleep and damage to relationships. Therapy (dubbed 'going cold modem') is, of course, available online – from ***www.computeraddiction.com*** or ***www.onlinesexaddict.com***.

a simple game of poker? GA (sort of like the TA, only with less strenuous exercise) has the answers here, along with local support groups and a recovery programme.

Narcotics Anonymous Way Of Life

www.nawol.org ★★★★

That's way of life as in recovery, rather than as in hedonistic drug-fuelled frenzy, unfortunately. Actually, the NA site has a nifty idea: rather than leaving you to order expensive self-help books, there's a book online for you to download and read whenever you feel the need to purchase large amounts of Class As.

Overeaters Anonymous

www.overeatersanonymous.org ★★★

No sniggering at the back, please. 'Now I can bend over and tie my shoelaces,' boasts overeater SL (who'd simply be labelled grossly obese anywhere other than the US). Learn how to shed those pounds and lose the compulsion to binge on fatty foods; and if you don't have a weight problem, one visit here will put you off for life, anyway.

Sex Addicts Anonymous

www.sexaa.org ★★★★

Ever since Michael Douglas used sexual addiction to explain away his dalliances with women young enough to be his daughter, it's been a fashionable excuse for philanderers everywhere. If you do have a genuine problem, this site features masses of material on diagnosis and treatment.

Just say no. Oh, go on then – what harm can it do?

best health sites ★★★★★

where can I...

GET AN ONLINE DIAGNOSIS?

www.intelihealth.com
The Yanks, as ever, have done it best. You might have to wait for a reply but any problem can be sorted on this full and frank site.

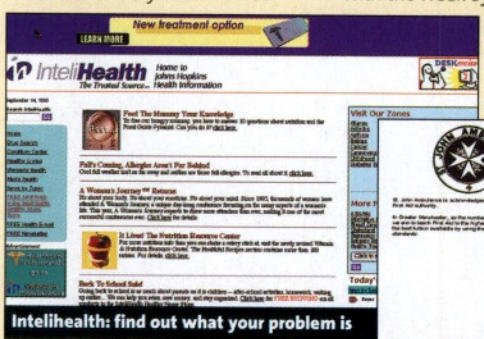
www.mayo.edu
Put your fears to the resident doctor and let him/her put them to rest (or give you six months to live).

www.quackwatch.com
Suspicious of conventional medicine? This site shows you how to heal yourself naturally.

www.who.int
Travel and general health advice from the World Health Organisation.

MAKE HEALTH A CAREER?

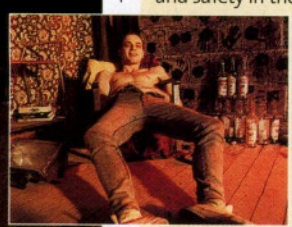
www.stjohnambulance.com
The St John always needs volunteers to learn first aid and help out at major events. Ulterior motive: your next Glastonbury could be free.



Intelihealth: find out what your problem is

www.enb.org.uk
Visit the English Nursing Board site to enquire about a career on the wards. It's a vocation, but the pay's getting better. See ***www.nbs.org.uk*** for the Scottish equivalent or, for Wales, ***www.wnb.org.uk***.

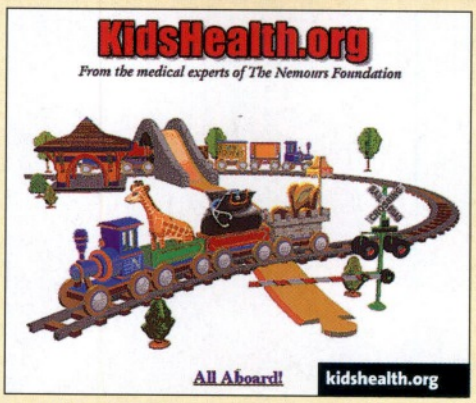
www.iosh.co.uk
Try a career in occupational health and safety in the workplace: from hard hats to toxins and acids.



web.bma.org.uk
The British Medical Association's homepage. Go for the BMA's guide to the best medical schools if you fancy a white coat, stethoscope and no sleep for seven years.

FIND OUT ABOUT PREGNANCY?

home.clara.net/fenix/essential-survival-guide.html
One woman's online guide to before, during and after those nine months. Supportive.

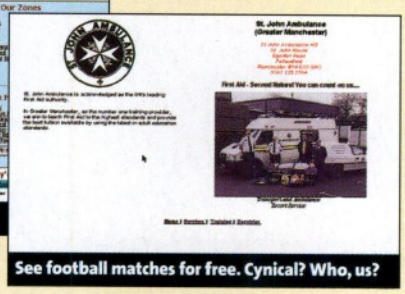


kidshealth.org

www.ukmums.co.uk
For mums and dads – everything you could want to know about bringing up baby.

www.babycenter.com
Useful pregnancy diary, with masses of resources for mums-to-be.

www.pregnancyguideonline.com
Find out what's happening and why with the week-by-week pregnancy guide – so long as you're not too squeamish, that is.



See football matches for free. Cynical? Who, us?

TRY AN ALTERNATIVE?

www.reiki.org/reikinews/reikinews.html
Get all those energy fields aligned online.

www.stat.org.uk
The Society of Alexander Technique Teachers' site lists people who can sort your dodgy posture out, whether you type or play the bagpipes for a living.

www.homeopathyhome.com
You'll find a search engine, a library, an education section, chat forums and lots of enticing ads on this sophisticated site.

www.osteopathy.org.uk/index.htm
Find out about the benefits of osteopathy on this UK home page – there's a good Q&A section.

CHECK OUT A HEALTH CONTROVERSY?

www.viagra.com
From Pfizer, the manufacturer, this Viagra information site's supposedly for consumption in the US only, but go ahead: you won't go blind just by looking at it in the UK.

www.bpas.demon.co.uk
The British Pregnancy Advisory Service deals with all sorts of fertility and pregnancy questions on this excellent site.

www.interlife.org
For those who don't support freedom to choose what to do with your own body, an anti-abortion, anti-euthanasia site.

www.ves.org.uk
The English voluntary euthanasia Web site. For Scotland see ***www.euthan asia.org/vess.html***

FIND OUT ABOUT CHILDRENS' HEALTH?

www.bbc.co.uk/education/health/kids/
An upbeat site, with nice graphics and a great Shockwave-powered tour of the human body.

www.grandappeal.org.uk
Wallace and Grommit's Grand Appeal aims to raise funds for the erection of the first purpose-built children's hospital in the UK.

kidshealth.org
Site from the US Nemours paediatric foundation, with sections for kids, teens and parents.

www.asthma.org.uk
National Asthma Campaign site, with a research round-up and useful support addresses and numbers.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.recovery.aa
The premier forum for Alcoholics Anonymous members.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

To join the Smoke-Free list, aimed at people trying to give up the evil weed, send an email marked 'subscribe' to ***smokefree-request@List-Server.net***.

GET CHATTING?

www.docsonline.com
Chat online with US doctors and specialists, without having to sit in a waiting room for hours.

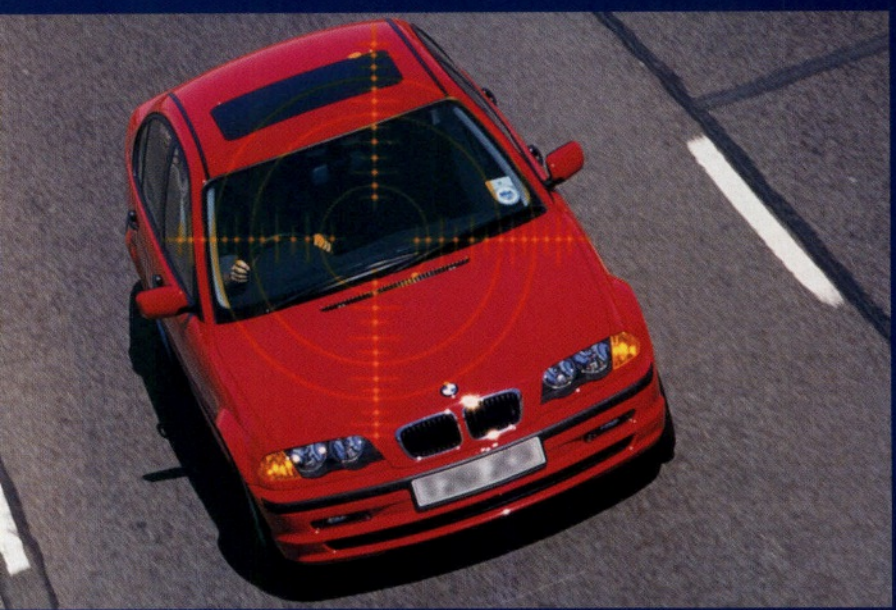
Looking for more health sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: REX, KOBAL

DIARY 10 October World Mental Health Day 11-17 October Deaf Awareness Week 31 October National Bug Busting Day
www.healthdiary.hea.org.uk

www.rac.co.uk

Car thieves
We're behind you all the way



The new RAC Trackstar is the most advanced stolen vehicle recovery system. It can trace and locate a car to within 5 metres anywhere in the UK. A hidden receiver links the car to us via the GPS satellite system. We can then work with the police to recover the vehicle. (And often the thief.)

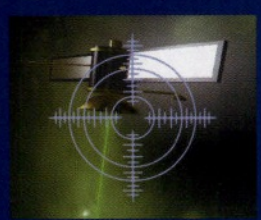
That's not all, if you're stuck at the roadside, you've got the option of a breakdown button* that enables us to pinpoint your position and get you moving quickly.

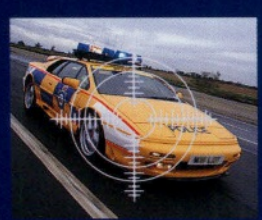
And if you have an accident, RAC Trackstar gives you the option of an emergency button* that sends your exact location to the Emergency Services. At the same time, opening a voice channel between the Operator and you inside the car.

RAC Trackstar is £347 inc VAT** or £312 inc VAT** for RAC Members. And for that kind of peace of mind, quite frankly, it's a steal.

The new RAC Trackstar is the UK's most advanced satellite-based stolen vehicle recovery system

- Protects your car
- Provides peace of mind
- Saves time
- Saves you money





Call for a free demonstration video

0808 100 9991 Ref. NET1

RAC Trackstar™

RAC

Trafficmaster™

RAC Trackstar is a joint venture between RAC, Trafficmaster PLC and Haymarket Magazines Ltd. RAC Trackstar, Gazeley House, Rockingham Drive, Linford Wood, Milton Keynes MK14 6PD.
*Optional feature available at an extra cost from early Autumn 1999 ** Does not include charges for connection, installation or subscription.

Room Service

www.roomservice.co.uk ★★★★★

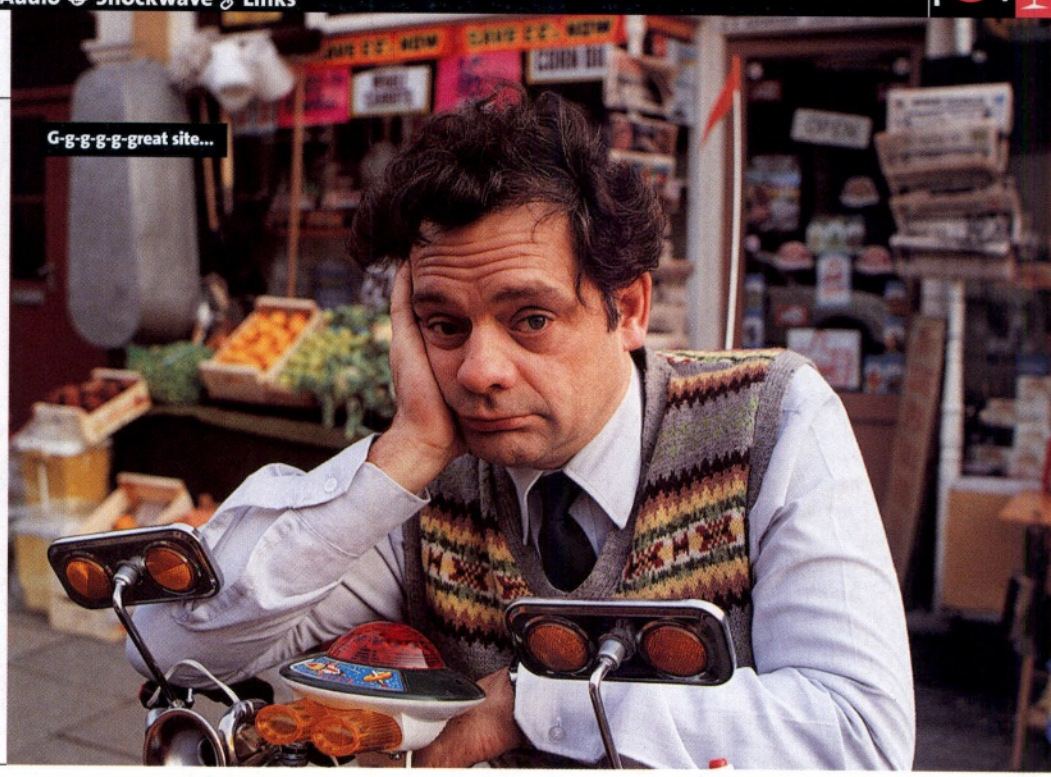
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

This represents something of a revolution in online food. Choose from more than 100 good restaurants, select your meal of choice and Room Service will whizz it round to you any time, day or night, for just a £4 delivery charge (on top of the original price of the meal). Only Central London is covered at the moment, but the site's initial success will surely see it expand soon. They'll even pick up (almost) anything on the way to your door, including drinks and cigarettes, for another £1.50. So good you can taste it.

ROOM SERVICE™ DELIVERIES

The Restaurant Delivery Service for London.

Order food from over 100 of London's finest restaurants straight off this web site and we'll deliver it to you in around an hour.



G-g-g-g-g-great site...

best food & drink sites ★★★★★ where can I...

BUY WINE ONLINE?

www.winecellar.co.uk
Hang out at the Parisian-café-style high street offie on the Net.

www.amivin.com
Impressive wine collection – vintage and everyday.

Surf the aisles without the trolley rage at www.tesco.co.uk

GET FOOD WORLD NEWS?

www.foodchannel.com
Get the lowdown on new tastes and find yourself an eatery.

food.epicurious.com
Strange little site with cooking tips, chef profiles and nifty food forums.

LEARN ABOUT GM FOOD?

www.greenpeace.org/~geneng/
How to avoid genetically modified foods, and where to protest.

www.monsanto.co.uk
Presents the opposite side of the GM argument.

FIND A DECENT RESTAURANT?

www.limitless.co.uk/dine/
Independent reviews and listings of restaurants across the UK, with the occasional foreign jaunt.

www.restaurants.co.uk
Search for an eatery, or visit one of the site's recommendations.

CURE MY HANGOVER?

www.TheVirtualBar.com
Some useful remedies, a drinking glossary and bar tricks.

www.wrecked.co.uk
Just one look at this drinking prevention page and you'll never touch a drop again.

BUY INGREDIENTS ONLINE?

www.tesco.co.uk
The most innovative of the big online supermarkets, offering 'aisle cruising' and extra Clubcard points.

www.sainsburys.co.uk
Has now entered the online shopping fray. Plenty of recipes and competitions, too.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.food
Anything and everything to do with the wide world of food. Try ***alt.food.low-fat*** for a healthier version.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Discuss anything food or wine-related by sending a 'subscribe' email to ***listserv@cmuvm.csv.cmich.edu***

GET CHATTING?

www.veggiecentral.com
Plenty of chat on vegetarian lifestyles and recipes.

Desktop dining

HOME DELIVERY Need a feed? Order a slap-up meal by computer from one of the new wave of food sites

Brits Abroad

www.britsabroad.co.uk ★★★★

Banished from Blighty? Yearning for the taste of Lyle's Golden Syrup? Then try your 'Expat International Corner Shop'. Brits Abroad will send you foodstuffs from home, including such institutions as Marmite, Penguin biscuits, Ready Brek and Walker's crisps (!?), at a reasonable price no matter where you are in the world. With an endorsement from no less a celebrity than TV's Carol Vorderman, how can you possibly go wrong?

Cakes Direct

www.thin-end.co.uk ★★★

Get a cake in a day from this innovative site, which does take a bit of getting used to the first time you visit it. The chocolate almond looks particularly appealing. You can customise a cake as a gift and send it with some chocolates. There's Cornish clotted cream, too. Nipping down to the local bakery is generally easier and quicker, and may ensure fresher goodies, but this service is certainly tempting.

Mick Jagger's delivery requests were growing stranger by the day

Morel Bros

www.morel.co.uk/morelsite/shopping ★★★★

If you're looking for something a little bit more cultured than steak and kidney pie, make this your first stop. Morel Bros specialises in fine foods – and that means caviar, foie gras and truffles all round, along with the ubiquitous hampers. It doesn't come cheap, but window shopping on Web sites doesn't get any better. Think Harrods' Food Hall – without the danger of bumping into Mohamed Al Fayed.

Oriental Condor

www.oriental-condor.co.uk ★★★★

One day, all restaurants will be like this – maybe. The Oriental Condor is a Chinese restaurant in Oxford which offers online ordering. Mix and match your favourites (deep-fried crispy wan-ton, for example) and email in your order. Your food is ready in 15 minutes. It does, admittedly, take away the fun of standing around in a shopfront for half an hour, watching *Blind Date* while you wait.

DIARY **16 October United Nations World Food Day** ***www.un.org***

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: BBC

A CD, maybe... but a house?

MORTGAGES Buying a £10 disc online is one thing – but what about applying for a huge property loan?

'Of course it might need a bit of work'

Abbey National

www.abbeynational.co.uk ★★

We told the mortgage calculator we were a first-time buyer looking for a 95 percent loan on a property costing £70,000, but it refused to countenance lending more than 75 percent of the property's value. Apart from the calculator, the site wallows in screeds of terms and conditions, and there's no online application form.

Alliance & Leicester

www.alliance-leicester.co.uk ★★★

The sickening sound of fist crunching on bone; shots ringing out as machine-gun fire slashes viciously though the night air... yes, it's someone trying to sell you a mortgage. There's an online application form but you need a map to find your way around the site.

Direct Line

www.directline.com ★

You might imagine that an online mortgage service from a company which built its rep by selling over the telephone would be leading-edge. But, while colourful, this is basic. Property loans are limited to DL's Flexible Mortgage and any attempt to interact meets with... a phone number. You can, however, get insurance quotes online.

Egg

www.egg.com ★★★

This company doesn't do any face-to-face business – yet, while its site is clean and modern, it's surprisingly balky. The mortgage form has its problems, too: 'other income' is demanded before 'main income'; out of nowhere it asks for 'date business started'; and you have to fill all fields before going on to the next page – irksome if you want a peek at what lies ahead.

Halifax

www.halifax.co.uk ★

If the vile design isn't enough to put you off this site, the endless faffing around in an effort to find an online application form certainly will. When you do, it's an Acrobat file – an effort, at least, but a fairly complex one.

John Charcol

www.johncharcol.co.uk ★★★★

This mortgage broker has a jolly site, even if red type on a coral background isn't the most readable colour scheme. The company can organise 100 percent finance at both discounted and fixed rates – worth investigation, as most other sites simply don't cater for the self-employed. You can send personal details and get someone to contact you – but why no online application form?

Nationwide

www.nationwide.co.uk ★★

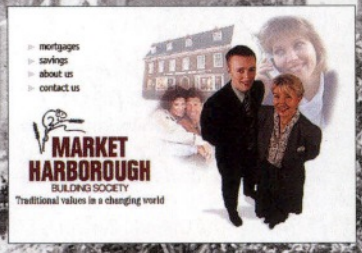
In its 'How Much Can I Borrow?' box on the Mortgages page, the Nationwide delivers an instant calculation with, mercifully, no need for any click-through. Every other mortgage company in the UK, please note. You pretty much have to be a Mensa member, though, to get to the online application form.

NatWest

www.natwest.co.uk ★★★★

NatWest's online mortgage application does have one thing to recommend it over most others. It recognises that form-filling is a pain, and requires lots of info, so it lets you begin the form, then

'And the last owner was a lovely man...'



Market Harborough Building Society

www.mhbs.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

You want to know where the cutting edge of mortgage e-commerce is? Market Harborough, of course. Not only does the Market Harborough Building Society have one of the very few sites in the UK with an upfront online application form (for its Internet Mortgage, logically enough), but if you want a chat with its call centre, you can click on the video conferencing icon and get the whole deal stitched, Webcam-aided, straight from your desk. On the down side, the site looks like a brochure for an old people's home, and the form could do with recognising a few lifestyles other than non-self-employed couple. Still, it puts the rest to shame.

stash it on the bank's secure server and come back to complete it later when you've rounded up all the necessary bumph.

Scottish Widows

www.scottishwidows.co.uk ★★

The site is plain and dour, while the grudging invitation to complete an online application form for one of four mortgage types hardly shouts 'I'm over here!' SW called us back very promptly with a quote for a mortgage in principle, though. No full online form is available.

MORTGAGE AUCTIONS

The soft sell

WORDS: ANN OLIVER; PICTURES: KOBAL, REX

Wouldn't it be a dream if, instead of you having to do the rounds of banks and building societies to find a mortgage, the situation could somehow be reversed so that they'd come to you, cap in hand, with the cheapest offer? In the US, a new site has launched just such a service. You put your personal info on the site, pretty much as you would on a normal mortgage application. An unholy scrap then breaks out as the finance providers fall over themselves to undercut each other and offer you the best deal. Glimpse a glorious future at *IMX.com*.

Make him do all the chasing

best money sites ★★★★★

where can I...

GET MONEY NEWS AND SHARE PRICES?

www.ft.com
The mother of all money sites: news, prices and analysis all served up in trademark pink.
www.bbc.co.uk
Comprehensive world business news and in-depth features, backed by Auntie's rock-solid reputation.
www.bloomberg.co.uk
Provides the professionals with up-to-the-second data; mere mortals can access it here.
www.ukinvest.com
News, real-time quotes and RealAudio market round-ups, with advice for newbies.

TRADE SHARES ONLINE?

www.barclays-stockbrokers.co.uk
The bank offers real-time dealing and acres of solid advice.
www.schwab-worldwide.com
Mega UK dealing account from the US giant, ideal for first-timers.
www.stocktrade.co.uk
Dealing service for UK stocks, with account info and portfolio tracking.
www.forex-cmc.co.uk
The first dealer in foreign exchanges and futures online.

SORT OUT MY FINANCES?

www.thisismoney.com
Online personal finance adviser from the *Daily Mail*.
www.iii.co.uk
Advice for individual investors: free Internet access and email, too.
www.moneyextra.com
Bargain-hunting service compares bank accounts, credit cards, mortgages and savings online.
www.times-money.co.uk
More personal finance advice, plus glossary, bookshop and tourist exchange rates.

LEARN ABOUT INVESTING?

www.mrscohen.com
Bernice Cohen (62, billed as one of Britain's best private investors) on how to invest your money.

An Email From Mrs Cohen
mrs cohen .com
Home
Mrs Cohen's Diary
Best Money Tips
Mrs Cohen's Books
Tools of the Trade
Subject Guides
Jargon Buster
Mrs Cohen's Team
Company Search
THOUGHT FOR TODAY
" There is a treasure trove of small companies waiting to be discovered by the diligent researcher. "
Time Out
"Personal finance with a heart and balls"
Mrs Cohen
Sixty two year old Mrs Bernice Cohen is one of Britain's most successful private stockmarket investors. She is also the author of several books on finance including the best selling "The Armchair Investor." Her two Channel 4 television series - "Mrs Cohen's Money" won her widespread acclaim as a fearless champion of the people.
The Daily Mail
"Mrs Cohen roused is a formidable sight. The big boys quake before her - as they should"
"Nearly all of us need a Mrs Cohen next door so we can nip in for a spot of advice" - Radio Times
HOT off the PRESS

Sick of big institutions controlling your finances? Try Mrs Bernice Cohen for advice

This is Money. That's what it says here

www.fool.co.uk
Proven advice for the learner investor – more a philosophy than a Web site.
www.tipsheets.co.uk
Online investment bookshop with a section devoted to beginners.
www.armchairmillionaire.com
Practical guide to making a million (possibly from your armchair).

GET FINANCIAL ANALYSIS?

www.invweek.co.uk
Award-winning financial paper *Investment Week* takes a long view.
www.economist.com
150 years of sagacity online.
www.hemscott.com
Sign up for the free ISP and get access to a mine of analysis.
www.wsj.com
The US equivalent of the *Financial Times*. Great for news and advice.

SORT OUT MY TAX?

www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk
Advice on tax returns and a useful self-assessment link to help beat those pesky deadlines.
listen.to/taxman/
Give it your financial details and it'll calculate how much tax you owe.
www.uktax.demon.co.uk
Useful links to government and independent tax resources.
www.tax.org.uk
Tax advice from the Chartered Institute of Taxation.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.finance
Traders and investors large and small gather to discuss UK markets and financial instruments.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Join the list from ***1929.com*** and follow Warren Buffett, the world's most successful investor.

GET CHATTING?

www.daytradingstocks.com
Chat live to some of those slightly unhinged American day traders.

Looking for more money sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

Designers Direct.com
The Webstore for Stylish Designer Clothing

Designers Direct.com has been redesigned to provide you with greater functionality, convenience and ease of navigation.

Woman's fashion department being added in late June.

Order Securely online or call Toll free to USA
00-800-987-67899

Featuring
The Largest Selection of Designer Jeans and Jackets on The Web

Everyday low prices
Up to 75% off USA retail prices
Delivery in 3-7 days

Alden New England® Michael Jordan® Calvin Klein® Nautica®
Polo Ralph Lauren® Polo Sport® Guess® Levi Strauss & Co.®
Tommy Hilfiger® Perry Ellis® Gucci® Ray Ban® Joe Boxer®
www.DesignersDirect.com
Birkenstock® Mickey & Co.® Campus® Oakley® Charles River®
DKNY® Doice & Gabbana® Fendi® Girbaud® Sebago® Versace®
Hugo Boss® Kangol® Cole Haan® Harley Davidson® and

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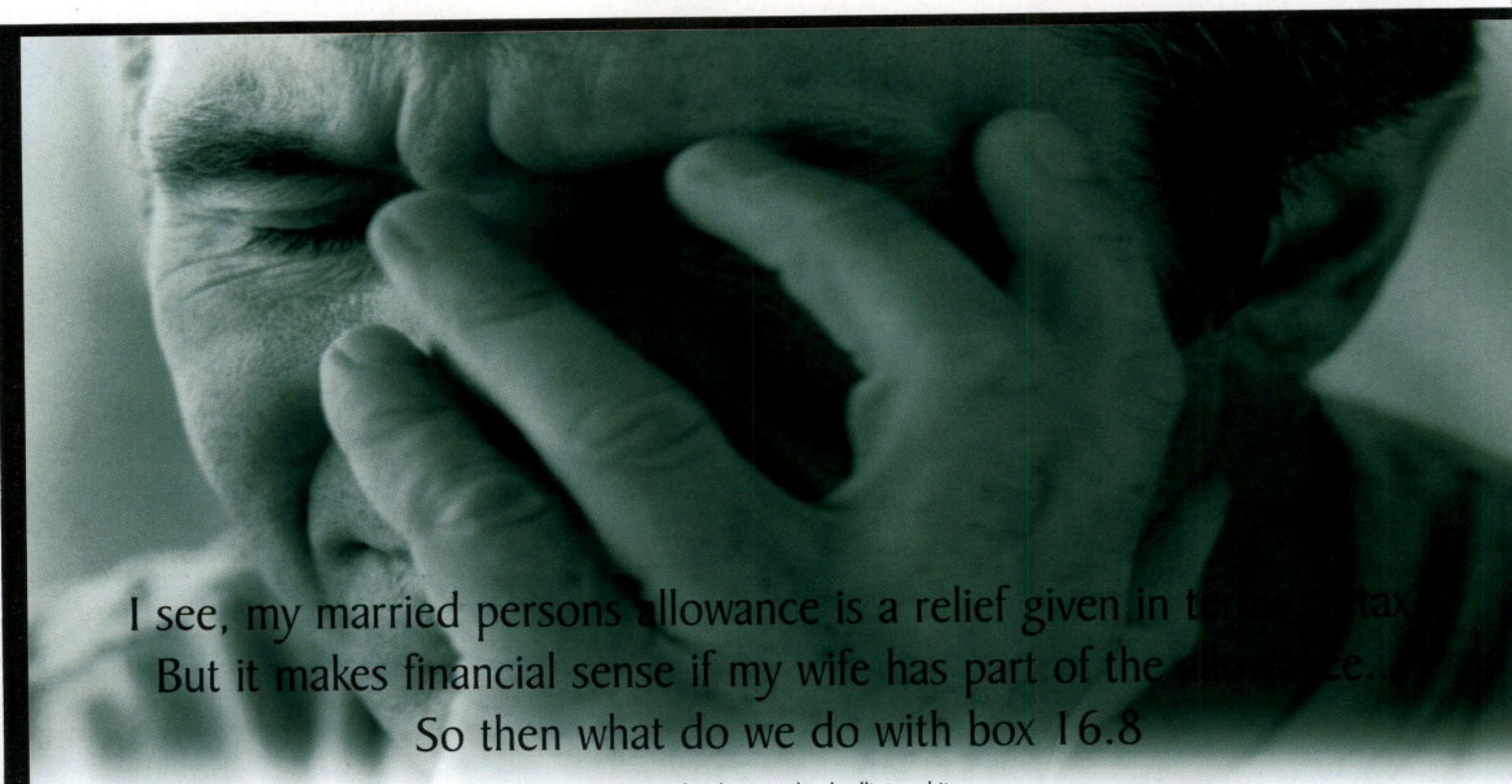
WIN A **SEGA DREAMCAST!**
go to www.bunka.co.uk to find out more

THE BEST DEALS ON **BUNDLE PACKS!**

bunka
ALL WE DO IS
DREAMCAST


I see, my married persons allowance is a relief given in t
But it makes financial sense if my wife has part of the
So then what do we do with box 16.8

Let's be realistic here. Calculating your tax return for self assessment is a hassle, miss the deadline and it becomes a costly hassle. So what do you do..? Spend three or four hours working out your tax liabilities, figure out how much you owe, answer a hundred and one questions, double check your sums and spend another hour double checking your double check.

On the other hand, you may find it easier to use etax? Simply log on to our web site, complete the simple form and we'll calculate your tax, produce the necessary documents and, once approved, email them on to the Inland Revenue. Totally confidential, totally reliable and totally hassle free. Giving you more time to concentrate on the other taxing things in your life.

eTAX

www.etax.co.uk
Telephone: 01227 280849

The kids still turn up to see Geri perform

Kill or curate

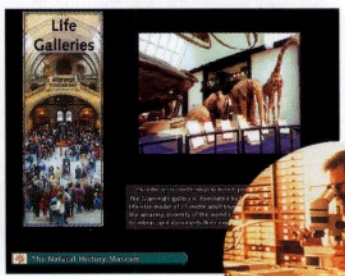
MUSEUMS Save yourself from a sea of schoolkids by bringing your favourite museum to your home

The Natural History Museum

www.nhm.ac.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Nothing could match seeing dino's bones for real at London's Natural History Museum, but this comes pretty close. As you'd expect, this site is top-notch and uses up-to-the-minute technology to bring it all to life. Best is the selection of virtual exhibits on topics ranging from the eclipse to the Beast of Bodmin. Proves there's a lot more to museums than dusty shelves and curators in tweed and you'll be dying to make an 'actual' visit.



The bugs queue for hours to see the boffin

Museums: fun

Imperial War Museum

www.iwm.org.uk ★★★★

Unlike the museum itself, the Web site of all things war-related is rather limited in its online content, but what is there is thorough and extremely interesting. The online versions of the museum's past and current exhibitions are perhaps the most educational – the section on the Enigma code-breaking machine is absorbing, and the language used is accessible enough for children, without leaving adults bored.

London Transport Museum

www.ltmuseum.co.uk ★★★★

Wait for one, then two come along at once. This is the first of two sites from the museum – if the first is anything to go by, the second will definitely be worth a look. Plenty of information on collections, details of past, present and future exhibitions, and groovy design makes it interesting for children and adults. And the Webcam on the museum's home in Covent Garden is more comfortable than a trip on an open-top bus.

Museum of London

www.museum-london.org.uk

You wouldn't think that Bill and Ben the Flowerpot Men were crafty cockneys, but they're celebrated as 'London Children' at the world's largest urban history museum's site. Info on the large collection of artefacts is hardly in-depth but there's plenty to keep your mind occupied, from 'Macabre London' to the campaign for better Christmas lights.

The Science Museum

www.nmsi.ac.uk ★★★

The Science Museum's site needs to loosen its knicker elastic a tad. Well-designed and jam-packed with everything science-related, but it is too dry and often too technical in tone. There's some top-notch interactive amusement to be had, though, and the 'exhiblets' (small articles) are first-rate.

best education sites ★★★★★

where can I...

LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

www.travlang.com

Seventy languages, from Albanian to Zulu, all learnable online.

www.learnplus.com

A superb site offering Spanish and German tuition.

GET HELP RESITTING A-LEVELS?

www.a-levels.co.uk

Help with a dozen popular subjects.

www.justincraig.ac.uk

Intensive cramming for resitters.

FIND A PLACE TO LEARN?

www.indschools.co.uk

Easy-to-use resource listing the UK's independent schools.

www.darch.co.uk

The best place to look if you intend to send a sprog to boarding school.

LEARN WITHOUT GOING TO SCHOOL?

www-icdl.open.ac.uk

The Open University – it needs no introduction.

Channel Four gets on the learning trail

learning.channel4.com

Channel 4's resource for home learners aged four to 19.

LEARN OVERSEAS?

www.eeop.com

Leisure and learning for adults and young people in Europe and the US.

www.ribi.org/yex/

Rotary Youth Exchange offers school year exchange programmes for 16-22-year-olds.

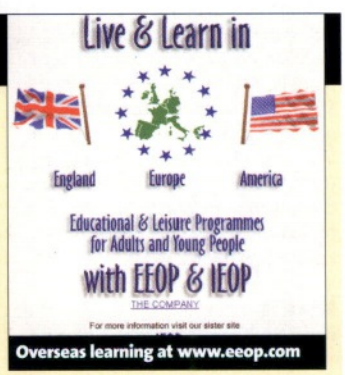
FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.education.16plus

Covers everything for students, teachers and parents.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Email ***mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk*** with 'join uk-schools' plus [Your Name] for the UK Schools list.



Overseas learning at www.eeop.com

GET CHATTING?

www.studentUK.com

Register with the 'UniverCity' and enjoy chat, special offers and forum-type deals, all pitched right at students.

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY

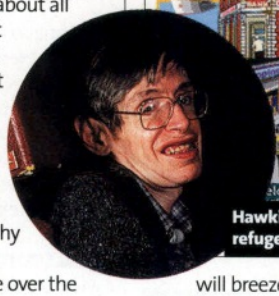
Millennial maladies

Y2K Still worried that you're not going to be able to have your New Year's Day game of Quake? Check these out

Action 2000

www.bug2000.co.uk ★★

This is the official, government-paid-for, home of the evil computer chip bug logo, which is about all it's good for (although it does make an excellent desktop pattern). Expect to be reassured in the most gentle and sincere tones about how there's *no* chance that anything will go wrong at all. Which is why the government has cancelled all police leave over the coming New Year, obviously.



Hawking – may be seeking refuge in Bugtown

Apple and the Year 2000

www.apple.com/about/year2000/ ★★★

Macs have been Y2K-happy ever since they were invented. Unlike others, their design bods actually had the forethought to allow for the fact that the present century would eventually come to an end. There's absolutely no worries at all with the hardware, and the software's fine too – apart from minor glitches with one or two very old and/or obscure applications. This site represents Apple's huzzah for its good fortune/far-sightedness. Hell, even Microsoft products are OK on the Mac.

Bugtown

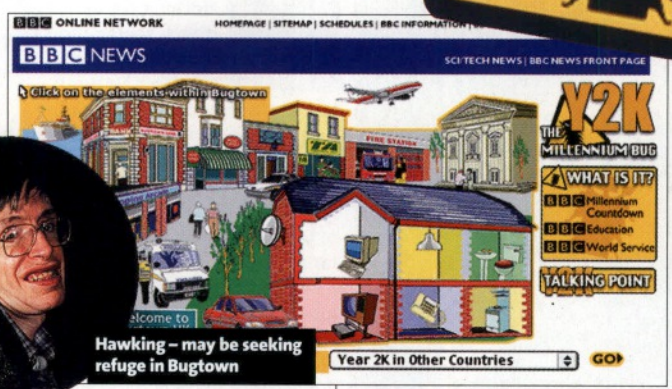
news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/millennium_bug/bugtown/government.stm ★★★

The BBC is keeping tabs on how the utilities, as well as your PC, are going to handle 2000. This rather peculiar-looking site (reminiscent of a public information film – *Charley Says Don't Play With Cobol*) collates all of the government's information in one handy place, and includes useful tips on preparing yourself for the millennium (don't panic!) and making sure your BBC Model B boots up in the morning.

Intuit

www.intuit.com/corporate /year2000 ★★★

The real issue for year 2000 is how well your software – not your hardware – will handle the rollover. You probably don't have too many programs that are vital to your life, but those like Intuit's Quicken – which relies on dates to keep track of your bank accounts – could be rather vulnerable. Luckily, every version of Quicken since Quicken 6 will breeze happily through to 2000, but it's worth checking the maker's Web site if you have others that track money or jobs on your home computer – you should be able to download a free upgrade.



Millennium Bug Survey

www.economist.com/editorial/freeforall/19-998/index_survey.html ★★★★

If you'd like to know exactly how we got ourselves into such a pickle, *The Economist*'s special report on the subject – published last year but packed with more information than you can shake a large stick at – is an excellent place to start. At least you'll know exactly who to blame when the meltdown finally occurs.

Welcome to the Year 2000 Challenge

computingcentral.msn.com/guide/year2000/msy2k/introducing/y2khome.asp ★★★★

We've notched up 'hasty' and 'smug' elsewhere, so why not add complacent to our vast list of sins? Microsoft hasn't ever really got its act together over Y2K. Even Windows 98, released just 18 months before the dreaded date, needs bug fixes to make it safe. This Microsoft Network site explains the problem in ample detail and provides links to utilities

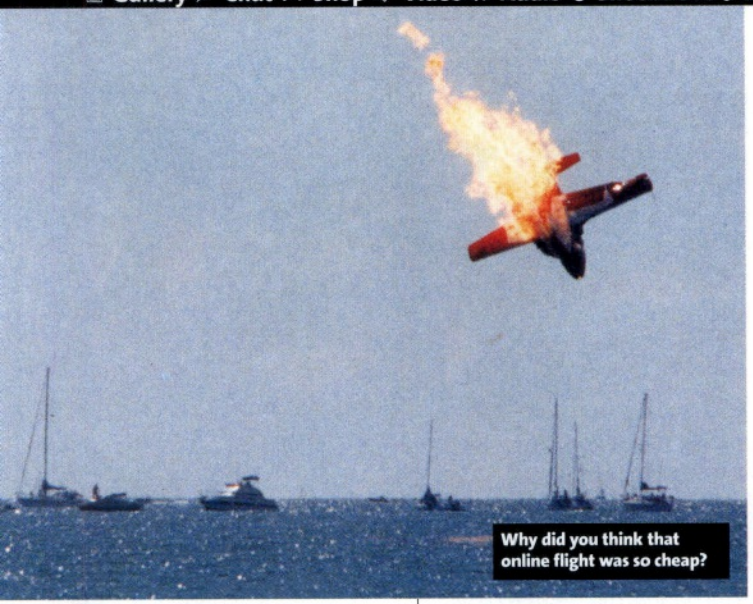
Y2K Culture

www.y2kculture.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

If you're convinced that the worst that'll happen is that businesses will spend vast amounts of cash on computer programmers with obsolete skills, then this site was designed specifically for you. The ultimate site for the connoisseur of apocalypse culture, it's jam packed with down-to-earth articles on the whole phenomenon. Bet you'll still withdraw as much money as you can from the cash machine on 31 December, though...

Things got out of hand at the Debenhams Blue cross sale ...



Why did you think that online flight was so cheap?

that can check your programs and the required upgrades. Prepare to download lots.

Y2K.com

www.y2k.com ★★★★

This site looks like a hasty afterthought, but it's a handy one-stop reference for Y2K bug-checking utilities. This, like nearly all such resources, calmly points out that if you have a recent PC, you only need make sure it's shut down before midnight. When it's booted up in the new millennium, it'll fix itself. In one of those baffling decisions that make Macintosh users smug, the PC BIOS manufacturers didn't bother programming these vital chips to fix themselves if the machine was left on. Presumably the motherboard pixies are supposed to come and patch it up when we're all asleep.

Y2K Kitchen

www.y2kkitchen.com ★★★

Spam, Spam, Spam... It'll become the most fashionable foodstuff on earth if we hit 2000 and everything goes pear-shaped. This is a gem of a Web site: it's paranoid and weird, but incredibly well-researched and ghoulishly fascinating. Makes entertaining with corned beef sound fun.

Y2K Now Or Never!

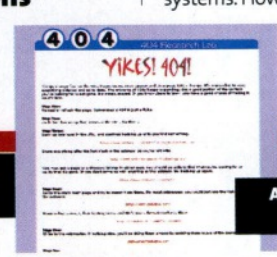
y2knowornever.com/HOMEx.html ★★

You're going to need something to do in the long, dark nights after New Year. You could always play the game of the millennium bug – Y2K Now Or Never is snakes and ladders for the apocalyptically minded. You stock up on food and essentials and try to make it through to 2 January. We're going to be hiding in a bunker with a short-wave radio, a stack of Kendal Mint Cake, and a flask of coffee, but you might find it entertaining.

Y2K Predictions

www.ironic.com/y2k/ ★★★★

If you want to know exactly what is going to happen at the millennium, then the Y2K predictions page is the one for you. Compiled by members of the ***comp.sci.y2k*** newsgroup, this is a collection of predictions from the people who should know – programmers who are fixing the systems. However, they've been about 80 percent wrong so far – evidently the fun's only just starting.



A 404 collector – surely some mistake? Er, no

best computer sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND HOT SHAREWARE?

tucows.cableinet.net

Odd name, but the best collection of shareware there is around.

www.download.com

Use the popular picks feature to find out what you shouldn't be without.

It's mydesktop.com: technical support and help

GET THE FINAL WORD?

www.cnet.com

'The center of the digital universe': everything a Net user could need.

www.zdnet.co.uk

Another computing supersite, this time with a specific UK slant.

GET HELP AND ADVICE?

www.mydesktop.com

Excellent computer news and features, plus tech support.

www.ask-a-tech.org

'Helping you help yourself'; allows you to submit specific questions.

FIND USER GROUPS?

www.lmug.org.uk

Enthusiastic Mac user group. Good for software and beer tips.

www.wugnet.com

Resource centre for shareware, support, tips and a whole lot more.

BUY HARD- & SOFTWARE?

www.cwonline.co.uk

Award-winning Mac bits suppliers.

www.software-warehouse.co.uk

Software heaven; everything you need from a wide range of makers.

GET STUFF FOR MAC USERS?

www.flashpaper.com/umac/

It's called The Ultimate Macintosh: go there and you'll find out why.

www.webintosh.com

Excellent systems, software and peripherals newsletter.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.comp.misc

Covers a wider range of topics than most computer newsgroups.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

For A-Computer World, a discussion on all things computer-related, go to ***www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/A-Computer-World***.

GET CHATTING?

chat.zdnet.com

Colourful US chat site with tech-talk in an accessible fashion.

Looking for more Computers sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: JIM SMITH

THE 404 ERROR

Come up and see my 404s

When the Web took off, the academics of the world were surprised. For years they'd been saying that hypermedia (the fancy name for pages with links) should have links that looked both ways – in other words, if I have a link from my page to your page, your page knows and can inform my page when and if it's moved. That's complicated to program, which is why the system never took off – hence the infuriating '404 – file not found' message when a page you're looking for has wandered off to pastures new. All very interesting, but wait for it – someone collects 404 messages. The collection at *www.plinko.net/404/* is the widest ranging collection of odd, informative and funny error messages you'll come across anywhere. It's amazing to see the outburst of creativity that each carefully crafted 404 involves – there are haikus, games – and even the odd useful piece of information. Check out *www.plinko.net/404/yikes.asp* for what to do if your page is missing.

Casting the Net

DREAMCAST Your Playstation sits in the corner, in its place a gleaming new Dreamcast. What now?

DC-united

dc-united.com ★★★★

This is building into a quite large and somewhat unusual Dreamcast site. There is regularly updated news, as you might expect, but step into the 'training' section and things get weird. You start by selecting between 'Grasshoppa', 'Warrior' and 'Guru', then each takes you through a training exercise in getting to know the Dreamcast. The Grasshoppa section starts with basics, while Guru level takes you deep into the graphic capabilities of the machine. A healthy antidote to the official site – and the sort of place that might send you into a graphics spin if you've had a few.

Dreamcast: surf the sexy Sega...

Dreamcast.com

www.dreamcast.com ★★★★

From the moment you enter, you know this is the official site: it's professional, thrusting and aimed squarely at the American market (at the time of writing the equally official ***www.dreamcast-europe.com*** was gearing up to launch). If you have problems with your Dreamcast there is a customer service section where you can look for help on getting the most from your console, including game hints. If you're after something fresh and funky, however, stick to that Natalie Imbruglia site.

Sega X

www.segadreamcast.net ★★★★★

Dreamcast has been the rocket up the backside the games industry has needed for a long time; and here's the site to light the fuse. It's slick, has good graphics and delivers in terms of content. The news is up to date, with solid reviews and previews, and there is a good cheats section, as well as interviews with some of the folks behind the games. Whether you're a Dreamcast owner looking to feed your information craving or a prospective buyer, you'll love it.

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Dreamcast.net

www.dreamcast.net ★★★★★

This site promises quick access to all Dreamcast news, and it delivers. The layout is simple, the navigation clear and it's an excellent, no-fuss source of tidbits You also have chat, forums and online voting. It all adds up to a great, comprehensive Web site for information junkies.

'Oof...'

UK:Resistance

ukr.seganet.com ★★★★

This could only be a UK-based site – it's funny, for a start. It also has a lovely blue spiral logo in place of the original orange one. There's the usual chat forum, and a 'shoppe' where you can buy... er, stickers. But if you don't find *South Park* or *Viz* amusing, steer clear. After visiting other Dreamcast sites and getting your fill of screen shots, this comes as a refreshing change.

best games sites ★★★★★

where can I...

Yearn for some retro action? Head for www.arrgh.co.uk

BUY COMPUTER GAMES?

www.game-retail.co.uk
Ten percent off marked games ordered online here.
special.reserve.co.uk
Huge selection of software and hardware from the specialist.

FIND GAMING NEWS?

www.gamesdomain.co.uk
Great news and game-related features on the ones that matter.
www.ign.com
An amazing site bringing you worldwide gaming news.

FIND DEMOS AND REVIEWS?

www.happypuppy.com
The newest demos and shareware games online, with an enormous download database.
www.pczone.co.uk
Comprehensive reviews and good demos.

FIND HINTS AND CHEATS?

www.gamefaqs.com
A veritable encyclopaedia of advice and secrets for your favourite games.
www.xcheater.com
The latest cheats for the newest games make their way here.

FIND RETRO GAMES?

www.classicgaming.com
Old computer gaming favourites brought back to life.
www.arrgh.co.uk
Relive the innocent days when games had names like 'Pong'.

FIND OUT ABOUT ONLINE GAMING?

www.mpog.com
A great resource for those wanting to play games over the Internet.
www.wireplay.co.uk
Britain's biggest online game service, owned by BT. Link up for a fee.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.games.misc
For general discussion about games. There are other more dedicated groups for different types, as well.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Trailer/7504/
Digital dimension handles info and cheats for PC, N64 and Playstation.

GET CHATTING?

chat.yahoo.com
Sign in and select the Comp: Games group to chat about games.

Looking for more games sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: STEWART DEAN; PICTURES: RETNA, REX

Crystal balls

PREDICT THE FUTURE Wouldn't it be nice to learn what's round the corner? These sites claim they can tell you

Adze Mixxe

www.adze.com ★★★★

Don't be fooled by Mr Mixxe's likeness – a sort of Village-People-meets-Goldie-Hawn-type affair; this 'astrologer extraordinaire' really does deliver the goods. Free daily personalised horoscopes are

merely the hors d'oeuvres; the main course is a selection of celebrity compatibility tests from the stars. 'Bill needs to roar with pride in the bedroom ... he appreciates Hillary's undivided attention.'

Ask Dr Love

www.askdrlove.com

★★★★★

Worried that your present (or potential) partner might not be the great love of your life? Why leave it to chance? Dr Love's impressively thorough compatibility tests give you a comprehensive breakdown of potential problems, with links to advice on sorting things out – and they're free.

Toaster Oracle

www.ruffwork.com/MySite/toaster.htm

That's right, a toaster. Simply choose a type of bread and fire her up: the toaster provides random words of wisdom, such as 'Light toast is often a sign your day will be a good one but nothing spectacular will happen. Watch your butter intake.' Look, we don't write this stuff. We just report it.

The Voice of the Woods

www.pixelations.com/ogham/ ★★★

Consulting a tree may sound stupid but is it any more ridiculous than entrusting your deepest secrets to Claire Rayner? Give this 'Celtic divination system' a chance. Ask a question and let the ancient trees produce insights into your past, present and future fortunes. A little on the loopy side, but that's oak-ay with us. Boom boom!

Facade

www.facade.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

If you're one of those people who can't even choose between the All-Bran and the Frosties in the morning without some sort of outside guidance, you need this site. Six different forms of divination are available here, from online tarot cards and ancient runes to bibliomancy (random guidance found by opening a book, eg the Bible) and the use of biorhythms. Just ask a question, submit some details and you'll have an answer in seconds. Warning: this really could take up a great deal of your free time.

'Get off my land or I'll get the dogs'

Mystic Meg: worryingly, some people actually pay attention to her

best weird sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND WEIRD NEWS?

www.joeha.com/whiteboard/

A collection of those silly little stories to email to your mates.

www.tabloid.net

National Enquirer-style paper, which mixes truth and fiction.

GET THE LOWDOWN ON ALIEN LIFE?

www.seti-inst.edu

The world's top ET-hunters track down the little green men.

www.conspire.com

UFO files, plus conspiracy theories and other crankiness.

FIND BIZARRE PICTURES?

www.forteanpix.demon.co.uk

Ghosts, UFOs, freaks and fools by the *Fortean Times* – who else?

hometown.aol.com/cbpiclover/page2/crime.htm

Pictures of 'ghosts'. But are they faked or are they real? You may never know, but it's worth a look.

www.everything2000.com for date daftness

SEE WACKY WEBCAMS?

members.home.com/ashtraycam

A Webcam – of an ashtray. Come back for fresh cigarettes.

www.coolercam.com

Watch a water cooler in an office. Someone might drop by for a drink.

SCARE MYSELF STUPID?

www.deathclock.com

Type in your date of birth, then let the clock count down to your predicted death.

www.europa.com/edge/weird.html

An index of unexplained phenomena. Weird indeed.

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www.everything2000.com

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www.mille.org

The Centre For Millennial Studies gives a full breakdown on Y2K.

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Tokyo ***www.tse.or.jp/eindex.html***

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Eureka-net ***www.eureka-net.co.uk***
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JJ Electronic Plaza Classifieds ***www.jjplaza.com/onlinead***
Localads ***www.localads.net***
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PhotoAds ***www.photoads.co.uk***
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Encyclopedia Mythica ***www.pantheon.org/mythica***
Encyclopedia of Law & Economics ***encyclo.findlaw.com***
Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia ***gme.grolier.com***
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Family Search ***www.familysearch.com***
Genealogy for All ***www.excaliburknights.com/genealogy/***
Genealogy Research Source ***www.genealogy.bookpub.net***
Public Record Office ***www.pro.gov.uk***
Rootsweb ***www.rootsweb.com***

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BRITAIN

10 Downing Street ***www.number-10.gov.uk***
Action 2000 ***www.bug2000.co.uk***
Arts Council ***www.artscouncil.org.uk***
Department for Culture, Media and Sport ***www.culture.gov.uk***
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United States ***www.whitehouse.gov***

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DIETING

Better Health
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British Heart Foundation
www.bhf.org.uk
Calorie Control
www.caloriecontrol.org
Cyberdiet ***www.cyberdiet.com***
Weight Watchers UK
uk.weightwatchers.com

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Ask The Doc
www.ask-the-doc.com
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Mayo Clinic ***www.mayohealth.org***
MedRef ***www.medref.com***
Mental Health
www.mentalhealth.com

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HIV/AIDS Information & Links
www.brad.ac.uk/staff/ijhodgson/hivlinks.htm
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National Meningitis Trust
www.meningitis-trust.org.uk

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webtamers.com/comedian.html
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The Simpsons
www.foxworld.com/simpsons
South Park ***www.comedycentral.com***
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FunSchool
www.funschool.com/preschool
Kidscom
www.kidscom.com/orakc/Mousers/mouse.html
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www.sesamestreet.com/preschool

8 PLUS

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Family Education
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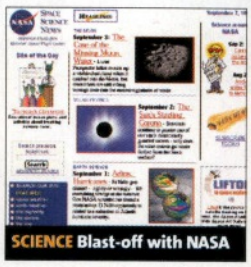

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Terry Gilliam 12 Monkeys director and animator of Monty Python starts off the week in the house. Also chat show queen Trisha Goddard joins us to do what she does best... Chat
TUESDAY
Comedian Mike McShane is 'Drop Dead Gorgeous' or at least he's in a film by that name.
Also drop dead gorgeous is actress Joey Lauren Adams star of new film 'Big Daddy'
And Justin Pressland wows us with some more collectables.
WEDNESDAY
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West Ham Utd ***www.whufc.co.uk***
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Racing ***www.sporting-life.com***
Rugby League ***www.rleague.com***
Rugby Union ***www.rugby365.co.uk***
Skiing ***www.complete-skier.com***
Tennis ***www.tenniscountry.com***

STYLE AND FASHION

MAIN SITES

BeautyLink ***www.beautylink.com***
Boo.com ***www.boo.com***
Cosmopolitan ***www.cosmomag.com***
Elle ***www.ellemag.com***
Fashion And Beauty Internet Association ***www.fbia.com***
Fashion Icon ***www.fashion-icon.com***
Fashion Mall ***www.fashionmall.com***
FashionNet ***www.fashion.net***
Models.com ***www.models.com***
Style Experts ***www.stylexperts.com***
Vogue ***www.vogue.com***

TOP LABELS

Armani ***www.armaniexchange.com***
Benetton ***www.benetton.com***
Diesel ***www.diesel.co.uk***
DKNY ***www.donnakaran.com***
Gap ***www.gap.com***
Levi's ***www.levi.com***
Paul Smith ***www.paulsmith.co.uk***
Red or Dead ***www.redordead.co.uk***
Tommy Hilfiger ***www.tommypr.com***
Wrangler ***www.wrangler.com***

TELEVISION

TOP SHOWS

Big Breakfast ***bigbreakfast.channel4.com***
Brookside ***www.brookie.com***
Coronation Street ***www.coronationstreet.co.uk***
Eastenders ***www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders***
Friends ***friends.warnerbros.com***
Jerry Springer ***www.universalstudios.com/tv/jerryspringer/***
Neighbours ***www.neighbours.com***
Teletubbies ***www.bbc.co.uk/education/teletubbies/tubbies.html***
X-Files ***www.thex-files.com***

TV COMPANIES

BBC ***www.bbc.co.uk***
Channel Four ***www.channel4.co.uk***
Channel Five ***www.channel5.co.uk***
ITV ***www.itv.co.uk***
Sky ***www.sky.co.uk***

TRAVEL

AIRLINES

Air Canada ***www.aircanada.ca***
Air France ***www.airfrance.com***
American Air ***www.americanair.com***
Britannia ***www.britanniaairways.com***
BA ***www.british-airways.com***
British Midland ***www.iflybritishmidland.com***
Continental ***www.flycontinental.com***
Easy Jet ***www.easyjet.com***
Go ***www.go-fly.com***
Iberia ***www.iberia.com***
KLM ***www.klmuk.com***
Lufthansa ***www.lufthansa.com***
NorthWest Airlines ***www.nwa.com***
Qantas ***www.qantas.com.au***
United Airlines ***www.ual.com***
Virgin Air ***www.virgin-atlantic.com***

DESTINATION GUIDES

Australia ***australia-online.com***
Caribbean ***www.caribbean-travel.com***
France ***www.franceway.com***
Germany ***www.germany-tourism.de***
Greece ***www.areianet.gr/infoxenios***
India ***www.indiagov.org***
Ireland ***www.shamrock.org***
Italy ***www.travel.it***
Japan ***www.jnto.go.jp***
Portugal ***www.portugal-web.com***
Spain ***www.spaintour.com***
UK ***www.visitbritain.com***
US ***www.go-unitedstates.com***

FERRIES

Ferry Savers ***www.ferrysavers.co.uk***
P&O ***www.poef.com/poef/index.htm***
Travel Britain ***www.travelbritain.com/UKPassengerFerries.html***
Travel.World ***www.travel.world.co.uk/ferries.htm***

RAIL TRAVEL

Euro Railways ***www.eurorailways.com***
Great Eastern Railway ***www.ger.co.uk***
Great Western Trains ***www.great-western-trains.co.uk***
Railtrack ***www.railtrack.co.uk***
Scotrail ***www.scotrail.co.uk***
UK Public Transport Information ***www.pti.org.uk***
Virgin Trains ***www.virgintrains.co.uk***

TRAVEL AGENTS

A2B ***www.a2btravel.com***
Airtickets ***www.airtickets.co.uk***
Bargain Holidays ***www.bargainholidays.com***
Biztravel ***www.biztravel.com***
Campus Travel ***www.campustravel.co.uk***
Cheap Flights ***www.cheapflights.co.uk***
Deckchair ***www.deckchair.com***
Expedia ***www.expedia.co.uk***
Internet Holidays ***www.holiday.co.uk***
Internet Travel Services ***www.itsnet.co.uk***
Last Minute ***www.lastminute.com***
STA Travel ***www.statravel.co.uk***
Thomas Cook ***www.thomascook.co.uk***
Thomson ***www.thomson-holidays.com***
Trailfinders ***www.trailfinder.com***
Travelocity ***www.travelocity.com***

WEBCAMS

DIRECTORIES

Allcam ***www.allcam.com***
Camcity ***www.camcity.com***
Digital Camera Network ***www.dcn.com***
Earthcam ***www.earthcam.com***
Webcam Central ***www.camcentral.com***
WebCam World ***www.webcamworld.com***

FAVOURITES

AfriCam ***www.africam.com***
Dealey Plaza Cam ***www.earthcam.com/jfk***
The Dolls' House ***www.bravo.co.uk/dolls***
FridgeCam ***www.electrolux.co.uk/show.asp?id=168***
Interactive Model Railroad ***rr-vs.informatik.uni-ulm.de***
Ultimate Taxi ***www.ultimatetaxi.com***

WEB CENSORS

Cybersnoop ***www.pearlsw.com***
Cyber Patrol ***www.cyberpatrol.com***
Net Nanny ***www.netnanny.com***
SurfWatch ***www.surfwatch.com***
Xcheck ***www.xcheck.net***
X-Stop ***www.xstop.com***

WEB DIRECTORIES

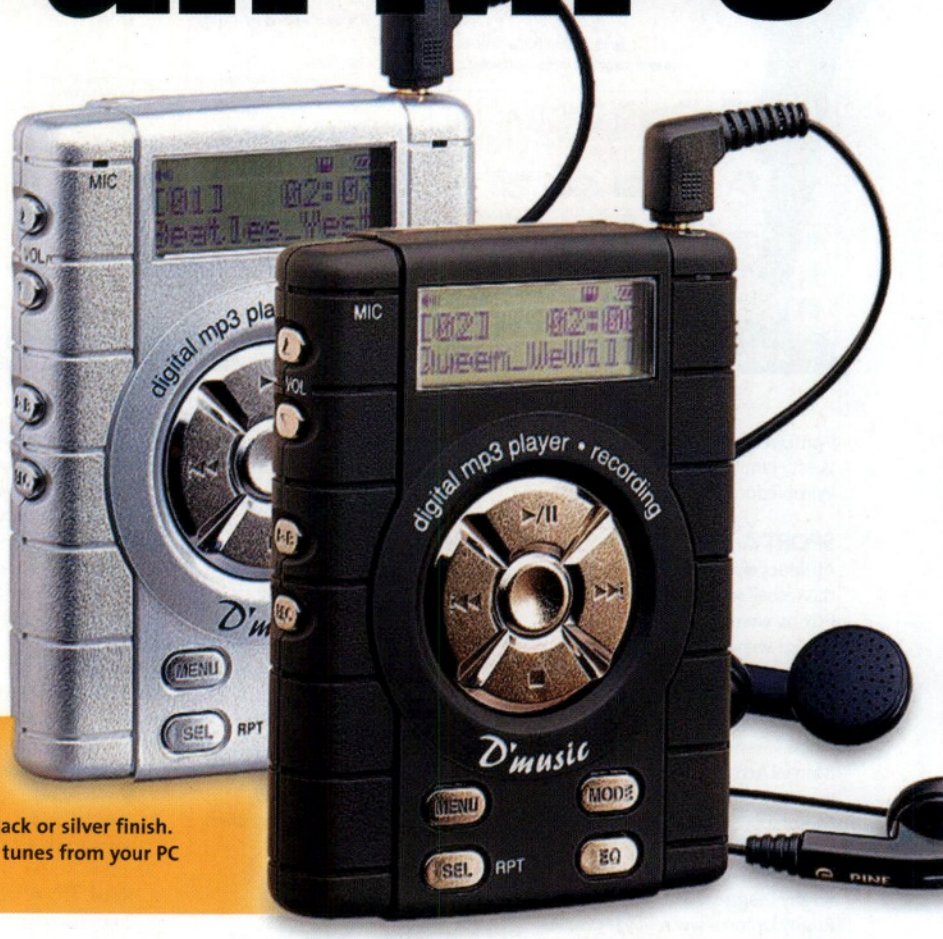
About.com ***www.about.com***
4anything ***www.4anything.com***
AOL Netfind ***www.aol.com/netfind***
DejaNews ***www.dejanews.com***
Excite ***www.excite.com***
Infoseek ***infoseek.go.com***
Liszt (Mailing lists) ***www.liszt.com***
LookSmart ***www.looksmart.com***
Open Directory Project ***www.dmoz.org***
UK Plus ***www.ukplus.co.uk***
WebCrawler ***www.webcrawler.com***
Yahoo! ***www.yahoo.com***
Yell ***www.yell.co.uk***

Grab an MP3

We've got 15 (yep, that's one and a five) Pine D'music portable MP3 players to win!

This month, *the net* has an fantastic exclusive competition to win one of 15 of these great portable players. And to enter, all you have to do is get online, type in an address – ***www.peoplesound.com*** – and follow the link to the competition page, where you will be asked the following question:

The Pine D'Music MP3 player supports MP3 content up to 256 kbps. But just what does 'kbps' mean?



Now when you leave the Web for the big wide world, you can take great music with you. The Pine D'Music has 32Mb built-in flash memory, voice recording, 4-band equaliser and comes in a choice of black or silver finish. Connected to your PC via the parallel port, it can move tunes from your PC to the player quickly and easily.

What is MP3?

MP3 is the most popular format for storing music (and video as well) on the Internet. It stands for Motion Picture Encoding Group – Level 3. The MPEG group is a non-commercial organisation who published a way to take CD-quality music files and compress them (using Level 3 encoding) to a small size without losing much of the quality. So you can get good quality music files at a fraction of the size they should be.

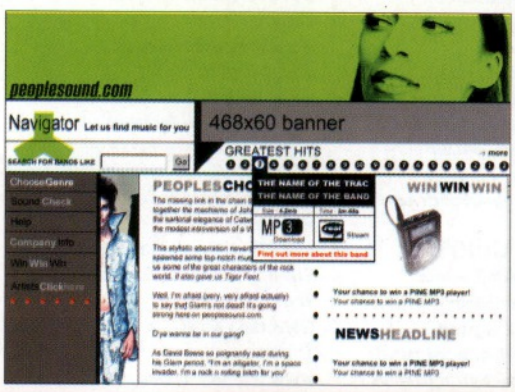
How do I find MP3s?

Point your browser to ***www.peoplesound.com***, where you can download thousands of tracks covering all genres from classical through jazz to dance and rock. The world's best music showcase, peoplesound.com is the fastest-growing showcase of new music talent on the Internet. Artists send their best original tracks, which are then converted to the latest digital music formats and made available. So, before you hear it in a club or see it in a store, the latest, freshest music is yours free with peoplesound.com. You'll also find photos, band information and gig listings. Add a whole host of chatrooms, forums, auctions, surveys and competitions and you have the Net's most exciting music community!

Get an edge on the music scene

Sign-up free with peoplesound.com and get a personalised selection of the freshest new music around. On your first visit to the site, they'll help you explore your musical preferences through an online guide, so each time you re-visit you always get music that's right for you.

You can also discover tracks yourself by searching the 40-plus genres, from hard hitting techno to relaxing elegant classical, be guided by the selections compiled by top names or just follow our charts of the best (& worst!) music updated in real time. Plus, you can tune in to genre-based radio stations, go off and do your spreadsheet or surfing and just select the tracks you like as you hear them. The choice is always yours and its all totally free! If you like what you hear, you can buy a custom-made CD of either a single artist, your own compilation or one of peoplesound.com's recommended selections. peoplesound.com is like your own personal DJ, taking the hit and miss out of finding the music you enjoy. You'll love every CD because you chose the tracks. It's great music you'll listen to again and again.



Is it legal?

Yes. Unlike some other web sites, all music on peoplesound.com is above board. The only MP3 music you will hear on peoplesound.com is from artists who actually want you to download and listen to their music.

Get Connected

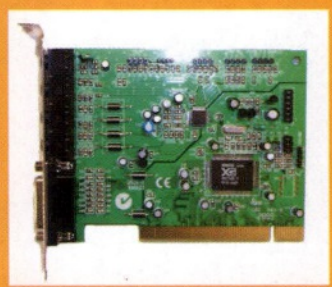
All you need to access great free music is an Internet connection and a multi-media PC. Once connected, it's easy downloading CD-quality music from the net. All you need is a digital music player, which you can download free of charge from the peoplesound.com site. Once you've downloaded a track, you can store it on your hard disk and play it as many times, as you like.

THE NET / PINE TECHNOLOGY / PEOPLESOUND.COM COMPETITION

player to go!

Plus! £10 off soundcards for readers of the net...

And they're delivered to your door!



Turn your desktop into a serious sound machine – *the net* and Pine have a great offer on the latest PT-2629 'Digital-Quad' PCI Sound Card from Pine Technology. Using the Yamaha YMF744 chipset, the card supports super-quad stereo with two separate stereo outputs for front & back speakers, XG Hardware Wavetable Synthesis, amazing 3D surround sound and much more.

The card is normally priced at £45.00. However, as an exclusive offer to readers of *the net*, Pine is offering the PT-2629 at £ 35.00, delivered straight to your door.

To take advantage of this once only offer, contact CPC on 01772 654455 and quote product code CH-65750. What's more, the card has an optional digital SPDIF in/out daughter-card that will be available nearer Xmas. If you purchase the sound card now through this special offer, then CPC will give you a 50% discount on the standard price for the digital I/O daughter-card upgrade when available (offer subject to conditions available upon requestfrom CPC).

For further product information see ***www.pinegroup.com*** . For terms & conditions of sale see ***www.cpc.co.uk***

Plus! Boxman are offering...

We've got 10 signed copies of the latest Bush album **AND** a limited edition of *Pickled Eggs & Sherbet*, the critically acclaimed new album from The All Seeing I, together with tour tee shirts, for the first 10 people buying either album from the Boxman site. To get lucky and win one of these great prizes, get shopping by doing the following things:

1. **Type in the URL – *www.Boxman.co.uk***
2. **On Boxman's homepage, click on the 'button' labelled *the net*.**

Signed albums and T-shirts will be awarded to the first 10 net readers who buy either album. With great offers on nearly half a million CDs, check out Boxman.co.uk. Grab chart albums for a tenner, or get the hottest new albums delivered to your door on the day of release.

Frying tonight: All Seeing I

peoplesound.com PINE D'music

there is no better way to buy music
www.boxman.co.uk
music by mouse

Terms and Conditions: Win one of 15 MP3 Players competition Closing date for entries is 31st October 1999. Entrants must be resident in the U.K. The 15 prize winners will be chosen from all the correct entries received by 1st November 1999. All prize winners will be notified within 48 hours of the draw by email to the address submitted with the entry form on peoplesound.com. Employees and their relatives of Pine Technology, Peoplesound or *the net* are not eligible to enter. No cash alternatives or substitute prizes will be allowed. The competition organisers reserve the right to supply a prize of similar value and specification if the named prize is unavailable. The decision of the organisers is final and no further correspondence will be entered into. Information on the winners will be available within 4 weeks of the published closing date and will be supplied upon receipt of a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Reader Offer – Pine Soundcards** The PT-2629 'Digital-Quad PCI Sound Card can be obtained at a £10 discount (including delivery) by telephoning the following number 01772 654455. Calls will be charged at the normal UK rate. Further terms and conditions with regard to this and the I/O Daughter Card upgrade are available upon request from CPC. **Reader Offer – Bush and The All Seeing I albums and T-Shirts** Full terms and conditions are available on the Boxman website (***www.boxman.co.uk***).

STUFFED WITH GREAT STUFF.
TESTING THE TASTIEST KIT
Stuff
£2.95 November 1999
TEST CENTRE
LOCK UP YOUR CREDIT CARDS –66 PAGES OF SCORCHING KIT
Webcams
CD players
Footie boots
150mph Audi S3
Video projectors
Skateboards & rollerblades
Dance keyboards
DECT phones
Digital radios
WIN! A £3000 TV
56in monster up for grabs
Travelling light with barely there laptops
Think thin
SPRING LOADED
Trail-blazing power bikes
CYBER SNAPS
Waiting to go digital? Quit stalling and buy now
ON SALE NOW

free serve

MAGAZINE

www.freeserve.net

MULTIMEDIA SPECIAL

MOVIES & MUSIC

FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Five Panasonic TVs, a DVD deck, a hi-fi and minidisc players – all up for grabs!

Sign up today
Get on the Net: it's free and simple with Freeserve

Best on the Web
Get free e-mail, Internet access and great content

Shop the Net
Buy on-line, save money: Freeserve shows you how

16 pages that will change the way you use the Net

No. 1 for the Internet

The next sixteen pages will change the way you use the Net. Freeserve is the UK's largest free Internet service provider, and this special section will show you how to sign up and make the most of your great free membership.

Joining couldn't be simpler. Just pick up a copy of our free starter CD-ROM from any branch of Dixons, Curry's, The Link, PC World or @jakarta. If you're already on the Net you can sign up on-line via our website. You'll be a member in minutes, and ready to hit the Net.

Freeserve doesn't just give you Web access – you get as many e-mail addresses as you want, free web space and all the help you'll need to get the most of your time on-line with us.

We bring you news, sport and some great competitions

But it's our content that really stands out. The Freeserve website brings you the latest news, sport and business headlines, great lifestyle content, amazing competitions and some truly unbeatable on-line shopping deals.

This spread will introduce you to the four main elements of the Freeserve package. In the coming pages we'll bring you the latest news from the Freeserve community, show you how our awesome website is organised and answer all your technical questions. We'll help you set up your own site, and our special features will introduce you to the world of multimedia and to Freeserve's revolutionary new credit card that you can apply for and manage on-line.

This month we're focussing on sport, with new rugby and cricket content making its debut on the website. And we have two sensational giveaways with thousands of pounds worth of multimedia kit up for grabs.

1.3 million people have already joined Freeserve; if you're one of them, you'll already know what a great service we offer. If you're new to Freeserve, you're about to find out.

powered by

free serve

www.freeserve.net

Start e-mailing

How often have you wished you could spend more time keeping in touch with friends and family? You might be put off by high phone charges, particularly for international calls. Or maybe writing a long letter is daunting.

Either way, let Freeserve's e-mail service help you keep in contact. When you sign up we'll give you an unlimited number of free e-mail addresses, so every member of the family can have their own. Our start-up CD gives you all the software you need to get started, and it's simple to install.

Once you start, you'll never look back. Soon you'll be adding pictures, sounds, files and web pages to your messages, and enjoying e-mail news and bulletins from your favourite sites. You'll wonder how you ever managed without us.

Don't fret!
Learn how our on-line help features solve all your Net problems
page xiv

Your home on the Web

The number of websites available on the Net grows by the minute – we're up to eighty million, and still counting.

But it isn't just boffins and big corporations that build their own sites. It's ordinary people too. They don't have specialist computer skills or endless resources, but just want to create a website to promote their company, club or themselves.

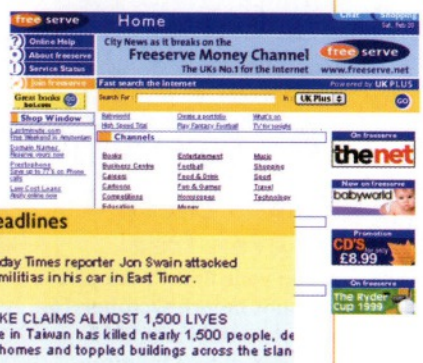
Freeserve makes this possible. Along with your free e-mail and web access we give you 15 megabytes of space on our computers to create and store your own web pages, and from there anyone, anywhere in the world can access them.

The Freeserve website has all the information and advice you'll need to start work on your pages. The information is organised logically and it's all written in plain, understandable English. On page xii we'll introduce you to some Freeserve members who have already ventured out onto the Internet with no previous experience but a lot of success!

Get on the Net and into our website

Freeserve gives you access to the Web. But our own website is so good that we can predict you won't want to wander!

First, check out our News and Information section for the latest headlines, sport, business and weather. Then move on to our lifestyle content, sorted into convenient channels covering everything from food and drink to technology.



Go a stage further with our Tools and Services, a collection of cutting edge, web based facilities that will revolutionise the way you communicate. The amazing reference section brings the resources of a well-stocked library to your desktop.

The Channel Guide on page vi introduces you to the site in detail. But the best way to find your way around is to visit. Be warned – you may stay longer than you'd planned.

And it's all **free**

The good news is that this really does come free. Just pick up a free start-up CD from any branch of Dixons, PC World, Currys, The Link or @jakarta, or you can sign up via our website if you're already on-line. Once you're connected, all you'll pay is the cost of a local call – wherever you are in the UK – to connect to our computers. But we'll never ask for a penny. The web is yours to use – no fuss. no catch, no commitment. Welcome to Freeserve, the UK's No.1 for the Internet.

Tony Stone, Empics

powered by free serve
www.freeserve.net

Five 'perfect' big screen Panasonic TVs to be won

A movie experience

Freeserve has teamed up with Panasonic to bring you the perfect competition. We have five Panasonic T [tau] televisons to give away. Answering one simple question could net you the TV of your dreams, and change your view on movies, sport and more.

T [tau] is the most advanced range of televisions yet. Named after the 19th letter of the Greek alphabet, signifying perfection, the range of 14 different sets offer first-rate sound and picture quality together with aesthetic elegance.

Flat-screen technology is used throughout. The range includes ground-breaking plasma models just 8.9cm thick and capable of being hung from a wall like a picture, alongside a vast 47-inch projection TV that offers the ultimate in home cinema.

We have four 32PK1 sets to give away, each featuring a 32-inch widescreen display and Panasonic's AFB Dome system for mellow, realistic sound. The star prize is an awesome 36PF10, boasting a 36-inch picture, the Straight Horn speaker system and a range of advanced digital picture enhancement feature to further improve the viewing experience.

To enter, just visit the Freeserve website and answer this simple question: T [tau] is the definition of a) television, b) innovation or c) perfection? Simply decide and enter on-line.

"The millions of people who have joined

NEW ON FREESERVE

Check out some of our great new features

Mean business? Look the business

Freeserve's Business Centre brings you a unique service that allows you to select and order your new business cards on-line. You can choose from the classic standard templates, design it yourself on-line or turn it over to our experts. Either way you'll get top-quality printing, rapid turnaround and great image!

www.freeserve.net/businesscentre

Education content gets top marks

We've been deluged with praise for our Education Channel. 'Fantastic and very relevant, especially for the kids undergoing the tests at the moment.' said Mr Gilbert, a Maths teacher from Kent. 'I think this is a very good idea, and a fun way to revise. Thanks for your help,' added Nicola, a GCSE student from Swindon.

www.freeserve.net/education

SUNSHINE Online
LITERACY HOUR
Hundreds of FREE ideas and resources for Freeserve users designed to extend the Literacy Hour with Sunshine Books. enter

welcome to prestophone!
the express route to great phone savings of up to 77%.
Accounts set up on-line within minutes – start cutting costs now!

Talk is cheap – or even free!

Open your first Prestophone account before October 16 and you could win 5000 minutes of free talktime, enough to keep going for three and a half days. The account allows you to save on regular BT rates, manage your account on-line and choose between prepaid and credit accounts. Sign up on the site today!

www.freeserve.net/communications

Get your e-mail on the move

Freeserve is offering its members a great new way of getting e-mail on the go. Our new pager service means that e-mail sent to your Freeserve account can be automatically forwarded to you wherever you are. It's great for personal use, and essential for business. Many people now do business by e-mail, and they expect swift responses. Think how impressed your clients and colleagues will be when you respond to their e-mail from the middle of the Yorkshire Moors! The special pagers can be purchased on-line from Freeserve's Communications Channel

www.freeserve.net/communications

Father and son team Edward and Anthony Latter from Plymouth won a trip to the Belgian Grand Prix in Freeserve's fantastic Formula 1 competition. There was even more to cheer about once the race started: the pair had a grandstand view of Britain's David Coulthard taking the chequered flag.

Girl power comes to Freeserve

Circle the Women's Channel

Think the Internet is too male-dominated? Think again, because Freeserve is launching a new channel on its website that is strictly for the girls.

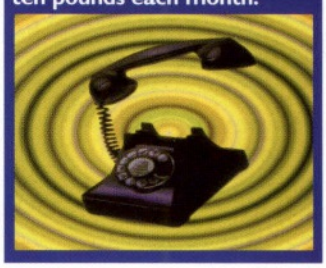
It's the perfect antidote to women's sites that only want to sell you clothes, or offer tired, recycled material from the same old women's magazines.

Instead you'll get striking new UK-focused content, relevant to the lives of modern British women. You'll find articles and advice on everything from choosing a mortgage through having a baby to making the right career decisions. It's all original, and written by some of the finest experts in their fields. Freeserve's Women's Channel will set new standards – come to the Freeserve site and be sure to check it out!

LATEST

Great phone deals on-line

FREESERVE now provides the perfect way to save money on Internet and phone bills without having to minimize call time. Freeserve Time, a new innovative service means that you can earn up to ten hours free Internet time each month. Simply visit the Freeserve site to sign up. Once you've joined, just dial 162 before making your national or international call. Every month you'll get a bill for the calls you've made using the 162 code as well as details of the amount of time credited to your account that month. You'll receive three hours of free Net time if you spend £3 or more on calls, and ten hours if you spend ten pounds each month.



Picture: Darren Heath

the service are testament to our success"

John Pluthero, Chief Executive

Learn valuable skills on the Net

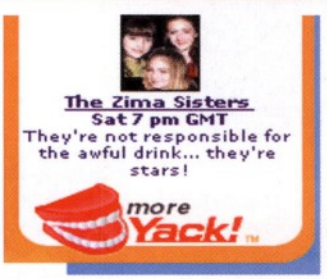
Freeserve will soon be launching a unique new service allowing members to learn valuable IT skills from home. Whether you want to boost your career, find a new job or just get the most from your computer, our on-line training will prove invaluable with easy-to-use courses prepared by our IT experts.

www.freeserve.net

It's that time of year again

We dread to mention it so soon, but our thoughts will soon be turning to the Christmas shopping. Most of us leave it to the last minute. Some are better prepared, and this year you can make it even easier on yourself by doing it all on-line. Our Shopping Channel has it all, from flowers and wine to CDs and electronics.

www.freeserve.net/shopping



Chat service just keeps growing

Freeserve's Chat service goes from strength to strength. We're constantly adding new features and new users – it's a buzzing place to be whenever you log on. Try our amazing 3D chat – coming soon, it allows you to see other users in virtual reality, as well as talking to them.

www.freeserve.net/chat

Happy Birthday to us - and you!

Freeserve celebrated its first birthday recently. On 22 September 1998, the Net world was shaken when we launched the UK's first fully featured free internet service provider. A year on, the service has more than a million regular users and free internet access has gone from being a revolution to an expectation. Freeserve Chief Executive John Pluthero commented: 'Freeserve has had quite a year. Our portal has won awards from the leading Net commentators and the millions of people who have joined the service are testament to our success.'

Choose a channel!

Technology

The Freeserve on-line technology channel brings you the gadgets that will change your life. We'll show you the latest products and technology, all set out in plain English. And when you're ready to buy, visit the Dixons on-line store on the Freeserve shopping channel.

Business Centre

Freeserve has launched a new service for firms – Business Centre. Keep up-to-date with business news; design and order your own business cards, organise conference calls, buy essential legal documents and access the tools to build a company website. Visit the centre today and enter our prize draw to win a Hewlett Packard all-in-one scanner, copier and printer.

News

Get tomorrow's papers today with our superb news service. You'll get all the latest UK and foreign stories from PA, together with tech and business news and a complete rundown of headlines from the national press.

Film and Cinema

If you're a major movie mogul we've got what you want. We cover all the latest cinema and video releases and go in heavy on all the big blockbusters. Play games, read news and enter competitions – you'll be way too busy to go to the movies!

Careers

We've got the world of work wired. Our Careers channel lets you search databases of 70,000 jobs.

Money

Freeserve has all the latest figures on every major firm and financial instrument, along with comment and analysis from the best in business, including Motley Fool and Mrs. Cohen. If you want to challenge your investment skills try our fantasy share portfolio game with the chance to win big prizes.

Communications

We bring you technology designed to help you manage your time and data better. Speechmail allows you to access your e-mail by phone, and reply with a sound file. Telserve lets you manage your phone messages, faxes and e-mail from one mailbox, as well as organising conference calls and web-based presentations. And Prestaphone brings you big savings on your phone bills with a Net-based phone account.

Chat

Around the clock, thousands of members of the Freeserve Net community are logged onto our website. Now you can use our new chat rooms to meet them, talk about your favourite Freeserve features and maybe find a new friend!

Sport

Whatever your sport, you'll find it on Freeserve. Rugby, Formula 1 or golf; you can get the results and follow your heroes on the Sport channel. Look out for Freeserve's new cricket content including news, fixture details and coverage of Test matches via a live scorecard.

Music

Whether it's Tom Jones or Tchaikovsky we have news, reviews and event listings on everything musical. You can buy gig tickets and CDs on the Net in seconds, and take your time over our features and news stories. Sounds good.

Shopping

Here it is – from one page you can access all the great Net shopping facilities brought to you by Freeserve. If you want flowers or furniture, a car or a computer you'll find it here. Save time and money – just shop direct from your desktop!

Domain names

Make the most of your free 15 megabytes of web space with our domain name service. If you're setting up a site for your business, club or just for yourself you can register your very own web address. You can choose a memorable name that reflects the content of your site, and see if it's available with our free search facility.

Football

Barmy about the beautiful game? Our Football channel caters for even the most obsessive fan. There's a complete results service, full table listings and statistics for clubs from the Premiership to the Conference. There's a full news service, a database of the top players and sections on all the top clubs. The Football channel will make your soccer season complete.

powered by

free serve

www.freeserve.net

Books

Shopping for books can be hard on the feet and the wallet. Let BOL, our on-line bookshop take the weight off both, with up to 50 per cent off the bestsellers. View our on-line bookshelves the way you want, sorting them by topic or author. When you're ready to buy you'll find rapid ordering and delivery. Book some time with BOL now.

Entertainment

Staying in? We've got TV listings and soap updates.

Going out? We'll show you the best in theatre, cinema, comedy and more near you, with times, prices and venues.

TV and radio

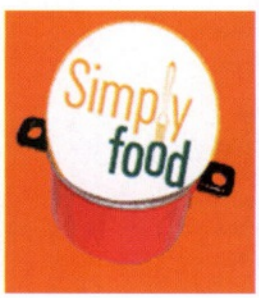
Not only do we give you full TV and radio listings specific to your region, but our critics will even advise you what to watch if you just can't decide. But only if you can tear yourself away from Freeserve!

Horoscopes

Let a star read your stars! Russell Grant offers daily, weekly and monthly readings for all the star signs. Take him seriously or with a pinch of salt, but we predict you'll enjoy his predictions!

Food and drink

From recipes to restaurant guides and cocktails to competitions – let Freeserve feed your food fetish!



Travel

Click on Freeserve's travel channel for instant access to our database of 70,000 flights and holidays worldwide. There are always sensational last-minute deals on offer. Also check out our on-line travel guide featuring all you need to know on your destination with climate, maps, money, getting visas and much more.

FOCUS

There's a great season of sport on Freeserve

All the home nations will see action in the Rugby World Cup

The next few months will be sensational for sport. The football season is in full swing, The England cricket team heads to South Africa for a full Test series, and the home nations will see action in the Rugby World Cup. In Vegas, the gloves come off for the Lewis – Holyfield rematch: this time, there'll be a result. Get the most out of all these events with our great new sports features.

Sport Channel

Our dedicated Sport channel brings together our coverage of cricket, racing, Formula One, golf, tennis and both rugby codes. As soon as you log on you'll get the top sports headlines. Then go to your chosen sport for the latest results and fixtures, along with in-depth, specialist stats and features.

Football Channel

The national game deserves a channel to itself, and that's just what it gets on Freeserve. Our great football content – provided in conjunction with experts Football365 – provides incredibly comprehensive coverage. You can access live results, upcoming fixtures and instantly updated reports and table standings. There are sections devoted solely to your favourite club, and bios of all the leading players. There's news every day, not just match day and analysis from the top pundits like Andy Gray and Danny Kelly.

Cricketline

New on Freeserve – and just in time for the upcoming England tour of South Africa our dedicated cricket channel is sure to become an invaluable resource. Alongside the serious stuff – live scores, news, extensive archives and links to over 5000 cricketing websites – there's a hilarious cricket lookalike feature and regular competitions.

Planet Rugby

Our new rugby service will be your first stop for World Cup coverage. There's news, results and fixtures, and a host of involving features like our all-time XVs and a database of top 40 try-scorers, caps and more going back to 1871. There are profiles of all the teams playing in the World Cup, and some fantastic competitions. Just visit the site to join in.

Sportszine

The new Sportszine section organises the sporting resources of the Net for you. There are thousands of the best sites, logically sorted into categories and rated by our experts. Every week we'll pick our overall top site, and we'll identify the best five in each sporting category, making it easy to find great Web content. Whether you watch or play we'll cover your sport. You're sure to return time and again.

Sports Trivia

Log on to our great new trivia service, and get stuck in to our sporting quizzes. If you finish at the top of the table at the end of the week there are great prizes to be won. And we'll pick random winners for our £50 spot prizes – you don't even have to be right to get the cash!

Empics, Retna, Rex, Allsport

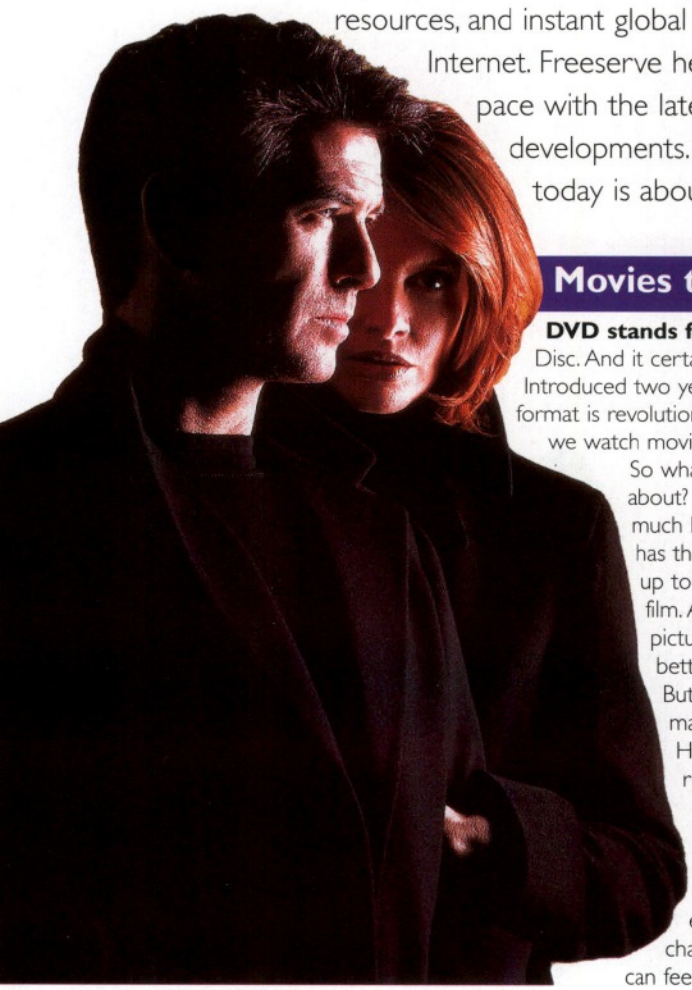
powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.net

New kit for the millennium

Advances in home entertainment mean we've never had more choice. Not so long ago families spent their evenings around a flickering black and white television set. Now perfect quality digital recordings bring the finest orchestras to our living rooms. New advances in movie technology allow us to witness the biggest blockbusters complete with cinema sound. And our computers give us interactive games and resources, and instant global reach via the Internet. Freeserve helps you keep pace with the latest multimedia developments. Technology today is about integration, and the Freeserve site brings together everything you need to get wired. We'll explain how the technology works, and bring you movies, music and games, along with the all the hardware you'll need to enjoy them. Freeserve's Shopping channel gives you the goods at great prices, and it's all delivered direct to your door.

"Trash that tired old telly – it's time to move into the new millennium"

Trash that tired old telly – it's time to move into the new millennium.



Movies that will move you

DVD stands for Digital Versatile Disc. And it certainly is versatile. Introduced two years ago, this new format is revolutionising the way we watch movies at home.

So what's all the fuss about? A DVD looks much like a CD, but it has the capacity to store up to eight hours of film. At 540 lines the picture quality is far better than a video. But it's the sound that makes the difference. Hooked up to the right kit you can enjoy CD quality stereo. Top titles offer cinema style 6-channel sound effects with a bass channel for audio you can feel. Watch all your favourite action movies on DVD – the effect will be electric.

DVD players like this Panasonic model fit into your existing hi-fi set-up

Want to upgrade? Make our Technology channel your first stop. It explains how DVD works and how to get the most from it, and points up some of the hot new hardware.

When you're ready to buy, move on to our Shopping Channel. Head to Dixons; you'll find a choice of the latest DVD players at attractive prices. You get all the customer service and support you demand without having to leave your living room.

You'll want something to play on your shiny new gadget. You can order titles direct from our Shopping Channel specialists DVDstreet. Search for movies, read news, check out the best sellers and get savings of up to 40 per cent – beat that!

MiniDisc magic

New audio formats appear all the time. Vinyl expired a long time ago, and the cassette is nearing the end of its useful life. DAT and digital compact cassette tried to replace them, but falied to make their mark on the market. But the experts agree that MiniDisc is here to stay. The 7cm square cartridges can hold up to 74 minutes of digitally recorded audio. You can record as often as you like without loss of quality, and you can add track information. Unlike a CD they're almost impossible to damage, but they're just as flexible with portable, stacking and in-car players all now available in the stores.

There's nothing new about CDs – we all take their perfect quality digital sound and instant track access for granted. But is it time to upgrade your sound system? And does your CD collection need updating? Music and technology move so rapidly that the answer is likely to be yes. And with prices for both falling constantly, there's no point in waiting.

Come to Freeserve's Shopping Channel for an incredible array of sound solutions. First, choose the kind of system you're after – we've got everything from personal CDs and portables,

through micro hi-fis to top-end MiniDisc separates. You can get great sound on a budget, or go for top-of-the-range kit to integrate with your TV and DVD for the full home-cinema effect.

Then visit Audiostreet, our on-line music shop to restock your CD racks. The unique new Ezy-Buy feature makes shopping incredibly simple, allowing you to make purchases with one click of your mouse. There are album reviews, a top-ten listing and our critics' choice for every genre.

Buy your music this way and suddenly your local record shop won't seem so cool!

All the kit pictured is up for grabs in our great competition

You can win all the Technics and Panasonic kit shown here

Star prize is a Technics HD505MD hi-fi system, featuring CD and MD players and voted Best Hi-Fi by the experts at *Stuff* magazine. Second prize is a Panasonic DVD player, and there are two Panasonic portable MD players for the runners-up. So, the questions:

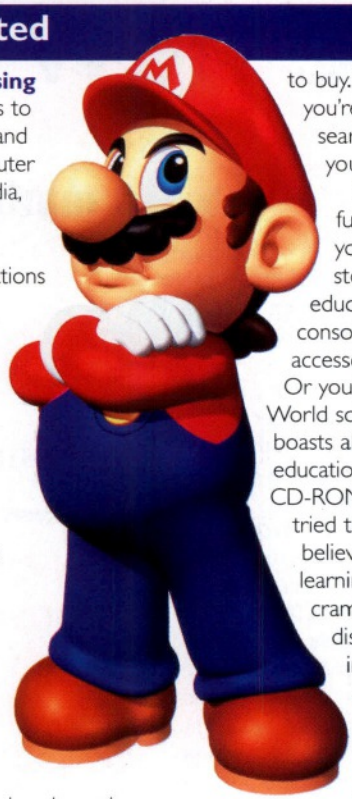
1. What does MD stand for?
(a) Multi Disc, (b) MiniDisc or (c) Mini Drive?

2. What does DVD stand for?
(a) Direct Virtual Drive, (b) Digital Video Drive or (c) Digital Versatile Disc

3. What can you buy from AudioStreet?
(a) Books, (b) CDs or (c) computers?

Just visit the Freeserve website to enter GOOD LUCK!

Software sorted



As computer processing power increases, the uses to which we can put it expand exponentially. Your computer is ideal for true multimedia, with the latest top end machines able to handle complex business applications alongside music, movies, games, the Internet and more. And the current crop of games consoles offer the ultimate in interactivity It's easy to lose a whole day just playing them!

As you'd expect, Freeserve brings you the full range of hardware, along with advice on choosing the best kit for your needs. And our selection of software is second to none.

For games, head straight to @jakarta via Freeserve's unique Shopping channel. Use Gizmo, the innovative web shopping assistant to help you navigate through the news and features and collect titles you want to buy. If you know what you're after, the quick search facility will take you straight to it.

But don't let the funky design fool you - @jakarta stocks business and educational software, consoles and a range of accessories for your PC. Or you can try our PC World software store. It boasts all the latest educational and reference CD-ROMs. Until you've tried them, it's hard to believe how much learning can be crammed onto one disc, and how involving study can be. We offer everything from pre-school packages to dictionaries and encyclopaedias, along with a full range of top-end business, finance and design software.

We make software simple!

Retna, Imagenet

Remember the way shopping used to be? Times are changing with Freeserve's new Net credit card

The new way to pay

Marbles – clear, accessible, friendly and familiar. If only managing your money was as simple! That's exactly what the people at HFC Bank thought when they came up with a brand new credit card that recognizes that it's the simple things in life that bring the most pleasure.

HFC has teamed up with Freeserve to launch marbles, the 60 second online decision credit card that's the new way to pay, on the Internet and on the High Street.

More than just an anti-fraud Internet shopping card with a safe shopping promise – because if you didn't spend it you shouldn't have to pay – marbles is actually making buying easier.

But perhaps what makes marbles so likeable is its easy language, secure access to your account anywhere, any time and an element of fun – you get to pick your favourite colour marble for your card.

You get all that and a very attractive introductory rate of 5.9% APR for six months on your purchases and transfers from other cards, and after this period a competitive ongoing APR of 14.9%. On top of this, there's no annual fee, no charges for your statements or for contacting customer services, acceptance at 200,000 ATMs and up to 52 days interest free credit. The smart money's on marbles.

You can choose which marble to have on your card

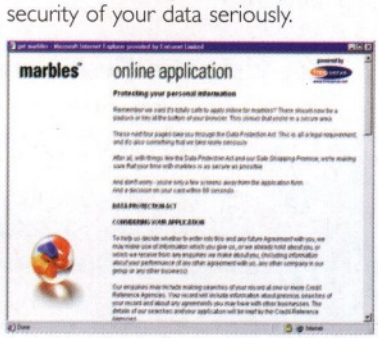
Marbles is accepted everywhere you see the Visa and Mastercard signs. Apply for the card on the marbles Freeserve site at **www.fscard.co.uk** and get an answer in 60 seconds. Or just use the phone – call 0845 609 1155 and quote A2B.

Step by step guide

Applying online for marbles is simple. The decision only takes 60 seconds, which is probably faster than you can tie your shoelaces. All you need to do is go to **www.fscard.co.uk** and follow the simple instructions. You can move onto the next screen or back to the previous screen just by clicking the relevant button.

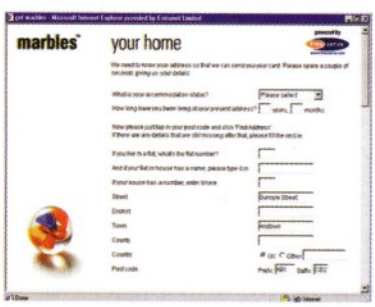
1. Remember we said it's totally

safe to apply on-line for marbles? The first screen gives you information on the Data Protection Act just to prove that we are taking the privacy and security of your data seriously.



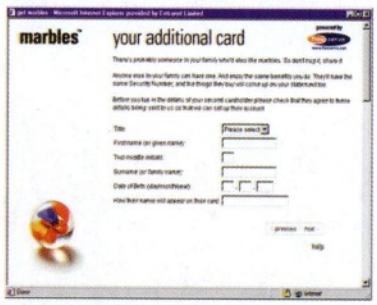
2. Now we get to the fun part. What's your favourite colour? With marbles, it's not just a case of choosing whether you want Visa or Mastercard – you get to choose the colour of your marble too. Just click on the design you want.

3. The next half dozen or so screens ask you to fill in your details. Don't forget that this is all totally secure. The first screen is for your personal details, followed by your home address. To make it even easier, all you need to do is type in your postcode, click on 'Find Address' and our computers will automatically fill in the rest for you. You just need to add in your house number or flat details.



You can change the details at any time. There may be extra screens asking for more details if you've only been at your current address for a short time. The last couple of screens are about your employment and your financial situation. Just fill in your details and move onto the next screen.

4. Now you get to make some more choices. The first decision is whether you want to take out insurance on your card and if you do, which type you want. The details

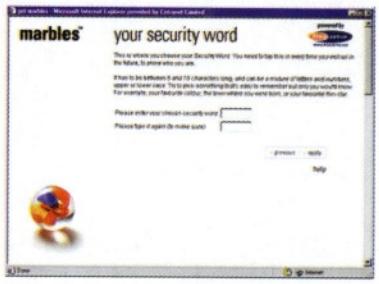


of each are included on the screen and all you need to do is click on your preferred option.

You can also request an additional card holder on your marbles card. If you say yes to this, a new screen will come up asking you to fill in the second card holder's details. You just need to make sure that they agree to their details being passed onto us.

5. You're nearly there. Security is very important to us and you. In order to prove who you are when you get in touch with us in the future, you need to choose a security word.

In just sixty seconds we will give you an answer



Enter it into this screen, and then type it in again, just to make sure.

6. You get a final outline of all your details and then it's time to submit your application. In just 60 seconds, we'll give you a decision on your card request.

marbles is issued by HFC Bank plc who make credit available under the card to persons aged 21 and over, resident in the UK or Channel Islands, subject to status and conditions.

*APR of 5.9% on Transactions and Balance Transfers fixed for 6 months from account opening after which this rate will revert to the standard variable interest rate which applies at that time (currently APR 14.9%). A handling fee of 1.5% (or minimum of £2) will be made on all Cash Advances other than Balance Transfers. APR 16.7% for Cash Advances other than Balance Transfers. Other than the fixed rate mentioned, all credit charges and APRs are variable. No interest on Transactions if the balance is paid in full by the due date, otherwise interest payable from the date of Transaction. Interest payable on Balance Transfers and other Cash Advances from the date of advance. Monthly minimum payment required is 3% of the outstanding balance, with a minimum of £5 or the balance if less. A written quotation is available upon request from marbles, PO Box 3615, Birmingham R3 2RJ.

Why marbles?

Our expert explains why on-line credit cards are safe, secure and easy

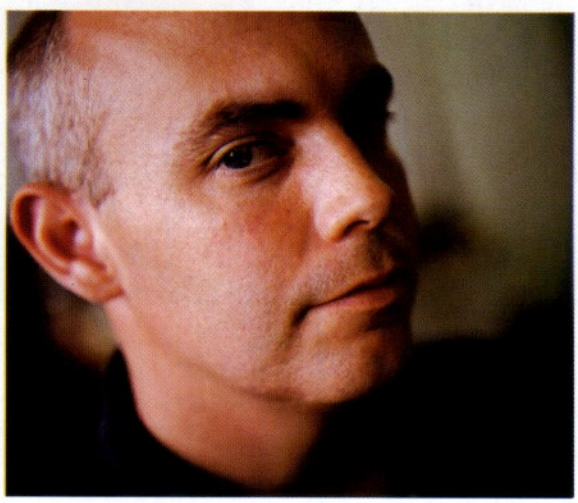
"We believe the Internet is a place where people will soon shop with as much familiarity as the local High Street.

Marbles is tangible recognition of what customers tell us they want from a credit card - good service, low rates, and easy use on the Internet. Customers also tell us that they are nervous about buying on the Net so security is very much an issue.

That is why we decided to create a new card to make buying on-line easy. It has a copper-bottomed, anti-fraud safe shopping promise. This means that if your card is used fraudulently – and this is unlikely – you don't have to pay a penny, as long as you haven't been involved in the fraud yourself or given your card details to someone other than a retailer.

Applying for a credit card is often seen as a long, drawn-out process, involving lots of technical jargon. Now with marbles a friend has rolled into town. The team here designed the service to use clear conversational language that we all understand and feel comfortable with. It doesn't talk to you, it chats. If you're on-line you can apply and be accepted on-line in less time than it takes to boil the kettle for a cup of tea.

We are delighted to link up with Freeserve and see marbles launch as a defining moment in the development of Internet shopping. With marbles you can see your cash whenever you like, and we show you where it went.



Dominick Tyler, Hulton Getty

Mark Robinson, HFC Bank's Marketing Director

Acceptance of Net shopping will grow once customers feel comfortable with it and their security concerns are addressed – this is what marbles and Freeserve are going to achieve. Apply now at **www.fscard.co.uk** or phone 0845 609 1155 quoting A2B."

We went fishing for fine sites built by Freeserve members with their web space. Here's our pick

Hooked on the Net

Fishing isn't the kind of activity you would expect to find heavily represented on the Web. It's a traditional pastime, often favoured by the older generation. All you need is a rod, a line a river and some time – far removed from the frenetic, high technology world of the Internet

But then you realise that angling is the country's biggest pastime, with millions of keen fishermen taking to the banks of rivers across the country every weekend. A quick Net search reveals a long list of angling pages. And top of the list is a site put together by a Freeserve member.

Nigel Brown has been fishing since he was old enough to hold a rod, but has only become serious about the sport in the past few years. It's the same with computers – he has been messing about with them for nearly twenty years, but it's only this year that he has learnt to use a PC and begun to use the Internet.

He hatched a plan to use his Freeserve web space to build a fishing site when he met Bob Roberts, a champion angler and fishing journalist. 'Bob said that he could use a web site, so I knocked together a mock-up in about a week, and it went from there. We never really had a plan for the site; it just grew organically.'

All you need is a rod, a river and time

If you didn't learn about fishing at your father's knee you might feel a bit left out. Nigel's site aims to put that right, and is approachable for those new to fishing. The 'Ask Bob' section provides comprehensive answers on everything from the best budget tackle for beginners to the best flavour maggots to use. If you don't know your quiver from your waggler, you will by the time you leave the site.

'Just today I had two e-mails from people who had been out and used some of the information they found on the site,' says Nigel. 'Angling can be a very competitive business, and particularly match fishing. Sometimes we can be reluctant to share tips. But when you get really positive feedback from people you have helped it makes it all worthwhile.'

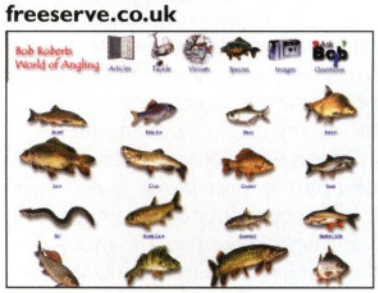
And it's not just beginners who'll be helped. There's a very attractive page with details on most of the British fish species, a listing of the best venues and 300 links to other fishing sites. The experts at Fishoo called it 'a beautifully designed site that even manages to make carp look pretty.'

We would have to agree. And it's even more impressive that Nigel built the website without any expert knowledge or training. 'I just teach myself new skills as I go along. I'm learning how to do Javascript and how to make a database work on the Web. But obviously I've got a headstart. If you're new to the Web you ought to just give it a go. It isn't difficult.'

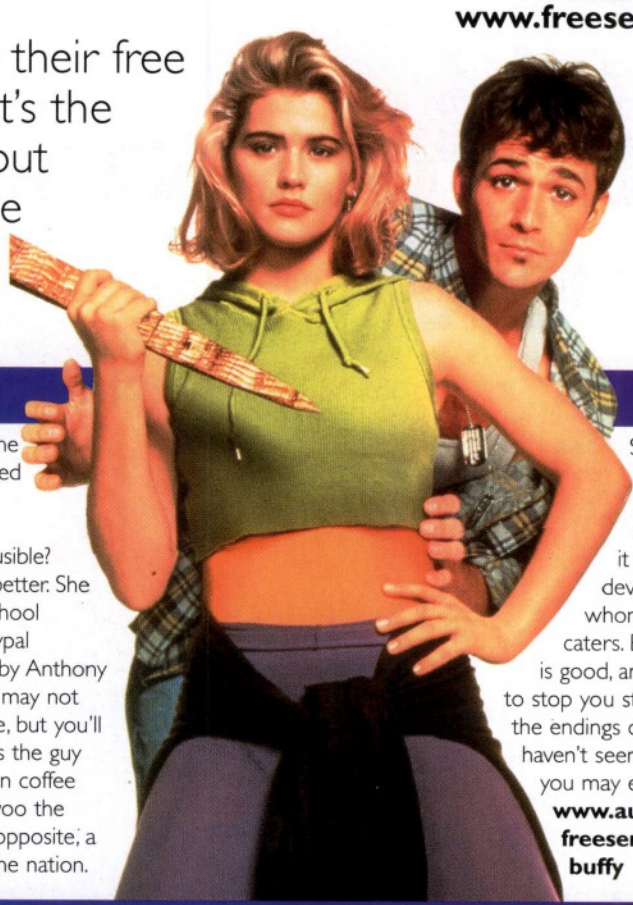
Nigel has big plans for the site, with a local search engine and a calendar of events planned. 'I want to make it the firt stop for fishing on the Internet. There are some big firms who have a web presence, and have millions of pounds to spend. But I'm prepared to put in the hours to make it work.'

Nigel still spends his weekends on riverbanks in the South West, fishing and singing Beatles songs to himself, badly. But the question is – is his angling as good as his web design? 'People tell me I'm quite good,' he says. No false modesty here.

www.worldofangling.freeserve.co.uk

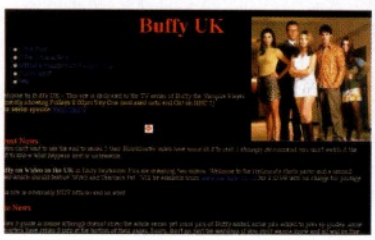


Many Freeserve members use their free web space to build a fan site. It's the ideal way to tell the world about your devotion to your favourite star, singer or TV show. We rate three member's sites



Buffy buffs go on-line

Buffy - if you haven't been following the TV shows on BBC2 or Sky – is an attractive blonde Californian high school student. She likes all the regular stuff, like dating, parties and – uh – slaying vampires. Unlikely as it may seem, this happy Valley Girl is also the 'Chosen One', tasked with defending the world from thirsty bloosuckers. Implausible? Read on – it gets better. She is helped by her school librarian, an archetypal Englishman played by Anthony Stewart Head. You may not recognise the name, but you'll know the face. He's the guy who spent umpteen coffee adverts trying to woo the woman in the flat opposite, a saga that gripped the nation.

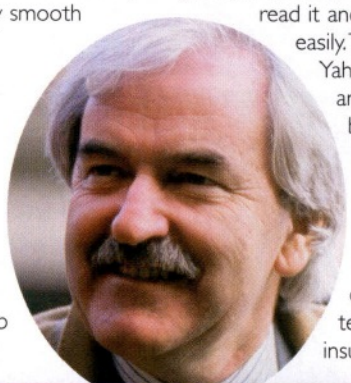


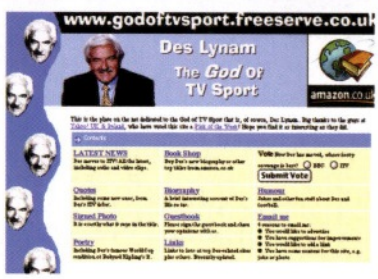
Sadly, Buffy the Vampire Slayer hasn't had the same effect. But it has some very devoted fans, for whom this site caters. But the content is good, and it's designed to stop you stumbling across the endings of episodes you haven't seen. Have a look; you may end up a fan!

www.autobots.freeserve.co.uk/buffy

The god of TV sport

No sports fan would disagree – the name of the site says it all. For twenty years Des Lynam's silky smooth commentaries have enhanced even the finest sporting occasions. Who can forget Des welcoming us to a World Cup match with the line, 'Good afternoon, shouldn't you all be at work?' Freeserve member Rob Smith has built a really excellent fan site for Des. It looks good, there's real content and you can read it and navigate through it easily. The site was a Yahoo Pick of the Day, and it deserved to be. There's a Des biography – it came as no shock to read that he was born in Ireland, and hence the gift of the gab. He spent ten years selling insurance – he must have made a fortune. You can view video clips of Des at work, read his finest one liners and even poetry. Earlier this year he moved to ITV, having spent his entire career up to that point with the BBC. But the fans haven't deserted him – they've followed him. Ace presenter, top site.



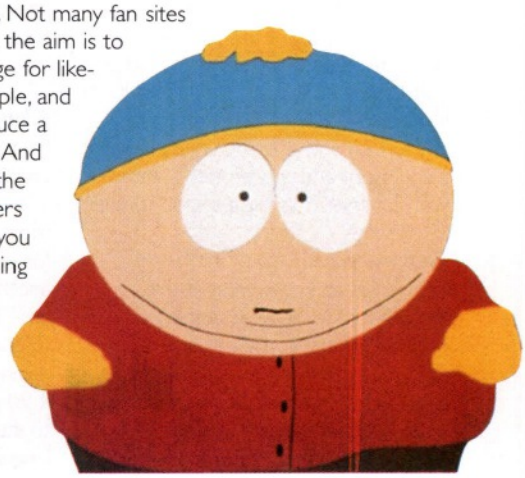


www.godoftvsport.freeserve.co.uk

Going down to South Park

South Park is one of those TV shows that manages to get massive ratings and a mass following, yet still retains its cult feel. Being a South Park fan makes you feel part of an exclusive club that gets the joke. In fact, millions do, as the vast range of sites devoted to antics of Stan, Kyle, Cartman and Kenny demonstrates. It was always intended to be a late night show, but children love it too, though the content isn't always suitable. This site doesn't obsess on the bad language, and there's plenty here for devoted fans determined to see every episode and collect every scrap of South Park information. There are schedules to ensure you never miss a programme and episode guides if you do. You can download everything from sounds and pictures to complete shows, and there's a beginner's guide with frequently asked questions if you've joined the party late.

The verdict? It's a good site with loads of content. Good content needs to be organised well, and that's where the site suceeds. Not many fan sites are like that; the aim is to put up a page for like-minded people, and not to produce a work of art. And you can let the site's designers know what you think by signing the on-line guestbook.



www.southparkuk.freeserve.co.uk

Your routemap for the Net

It's a jungle out there. To find your way around the Net you'll need a sense of adventure and a lot of help. Let

Freeserve's Technical Producer **Gavin Sweet** guide you

The Net is like a vast new city: it's fun to wander aimlessly for a few days but before long you're going to get foot-sore. How can you find all great things the travel agent boasted about? You have to search for them, and wandering the streets isn't the best way to do it.

Unfortunately most of the territory is uncharted, the maps are sketchy and the indexes are in strange languages. You could give up, or you could make the most of the few resources you have and discover the hidden wonders of this new world. Read the guide books, use the right maps, learn a bit of the lingo and if it's there you'll find it. Chances are you'll soon find yourself visiting the place more and more often - and you don't want to be a tourist forever.

Before you leave the hotel

You've got to know what you're looking for - exactly. As any expedition planner will tell you the five Ps are sacrosanct: prior planning prevents poor performance. Before you log on, spend a couple of minutes defining your search; it'll save you money on phone bills. What kind of thing are you looking for? If it's something a little out of the ordinary, very specific or precise you'll want to use a Search Engine, on the other hand if it's something easily classifiable and unspecific – any Chinese restaurant, as opposed to a particular Chinese restaurant – then you'll be better off starting with a Directory.

Choosing a Map

Find a search engine that you're comfortable with and stick with it. Which is the fastest? Which is the most comprehensive? Which is good for one type of search, which for another? You're not going to waste time finding out, instead you're going to choose one big-name search engine – such as Alta Vista – and use it 90 per cent of the time. You're going to study it, read its help files, learn it's language and, especially, how to apply its filters. It's going to be your travelling companion, so get to know it well.

Learn the lingo and if it's there, you will find it

The Guide Book

Whereas search engines index keywords in millions of web pages, directories, such as Yahoo, select web sites and sort them into categories. You can either browse through the categories – such as Entertainment-Films-Westerns-John Wayne films – or search for a particular category. This time you're going to select two directories: one for international searches and one for UK specific searches. That's because directories tend to be biased towards one particular place, and it's usually North America. The golden rule doesn't change – get to know your way around your chosen directories.

Tourist Information Office

If your search falls into a very clear and popular category, you might want to try one of the excellent Guide Sites. These have sections on a wide range of topics, written by human guides who've searched the Internet for you – Suite 101 and About.com are the best known general guide sites, but many Internet Service now have their own guide. Links on guide sites are less likely to be dead and are more likely to contain good quality and reliable information.

Shall we go to this museum or that one, or the other?

Much is made of the fact that search engines return thousands of hits. Many of the hits will be the same site, dead links, or completely irrelevant with your search terms buried somewhere within them. Don't be put off by lots of hits. If you've studied your search engine so you can apply filters, and spent time planning your search so it's well defined, then you can ignore the majority of the results. Just check out the first two or three on the list, if they're relevant, then you structured a good search - keep checking the hits until they stop being relevant.

Journal entries

Top tip: bookmark every useful site you find. The real value of search experience is your collection of bookmarks or favourites. If you keep a record of where you've been, then it's easy to find your way back and you'll soon find you don't even have to do a search to find the information you want. In Internet Explorer you can create a filing cabinet with directories from A-Z and file away useful sites for easy retrieval later. Alternatively, there are specialist programme, such as Compass, which give you even more control over your library of sites.

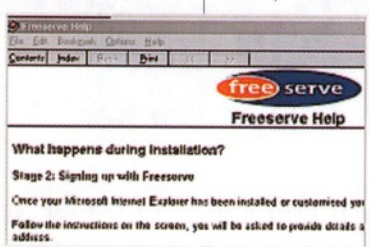
I'm no tourist: I'm a traveller

By now you should have a trusty map and a couple of well-thumbed guide books. What's more you should be on first name terms with two or three tourist information officers and be nearly fluent in the lingo. Hopefully, you're also keeping accurate record of where you've been. You can now start using more detailed maps – that is find out about specialist search engines and directories – or take the occasional taxi – test drive search software and meta-searches. It's up to you, after all you're already finding what you want mostt of the time. Occasionally you should just go out and wander the street of Netopolis. Chances are you'll find something you didn't know you were looking for.

HELP IS AT HAND

How can you find all the stuff the Internet boasts about?

Luis Ogando, Senior Consultant on our Helpline explains how to get your Net questions answered instantly



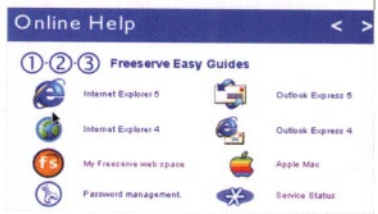
What are my options?

If you're new to the Net, Freeserve is committed to making it as easy as possible for you to get on-line. So we've included a comprehensive Help feature with the Freeserve start-up CD-ROM, and redesigned our on-line help section on the site. You can turn to Freeserve and get a straight answer, straight away.

How do I find answers on the CD-ROM help?

When you put the Freeserve CD in your machine you'll be given four options. The help button takes you to a comprehensive set of Net answers. There's a content guide, a full alphabetical index of topics and a find function – all designed to take you straight to the answer you need. Separate sections deal with everything you need to know to avoid problems before set-up, and tell you what to expect as you begin to install Freeserve on your machine.

How does the on-line help work? It's easy. There are four main sources of information. Read through the descriptions below and you'll soon see which best suits the type of query you have. Then connect to Freeserve and get all your questions answered quickly.



The glossary

If there's an Internet expression you don't understand, turn to our glossary first. It's more than likely to be there, with hundreds of technical terms.

The Easy Guides

If there's one area of your Internet use that is causing you difficulty, turn to our Easy Guides for a complete solution. Here you'll find answers sorted by subject.

Questions and Answers

If there's a specific question you need answered, turn to our Q&A section for rapid help. First select the general area of your query from our drop-down menu, then your specific question. We've looked closely at the kinds of questions our members need help with, so you're sure to find an answer.

Contacts

If you still need help, you can e-mail our support staff. They're the same people who man our phone helpdesks, and they're trained to deal with your queries. Direct e-mail addresses are listed on the contacts page. They'll be happy to help you!

Pictures: Anthony Cullen, Matthew Ward

free serve Online Help < > X

www.freeserve.net/cserve

free serve
www.freeserve.net

Using Freeserve couldn't be simpler, but from time to time you might have a question for one of our experts. To help you get the most out of your connection, Freeserve's Technical Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our trained staff can provide you with instant answers in plain English on a range of Net subjects. Calls cost 50p per minute

PC Support 0906 2517517
Mac Support 0906 7234000

MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE TAKING OFF WITH US

Over one million people surf the net with Freeserve. Our fast, reliable service and unique homepage provides instant benefits including:

- Top 10 CDs from £9.99 (including free UK delivery)
- Up to the minute financial & company information
- Save up to 50% on best selling books
- Keep in touch – phone to hear and reply to e-mails
- Last minute holidays and weekend breaks
- The latest news, sport, weather and much more

"I found it on freeserve"

THE UK'S No1 FOR THE INTERNET

free serve

www.freeserve.net

Join us on-line now or pick up a free CD at any branch of Dixons, PC World, Currys, The Link or @jakarta

Internet access is subject to standard local call rates.

stepbystep

Whether it's sending your first email or having a natter online, we'll tell you how to do it here. Plus, this month we show you how easy it is to create your own Web site

Your technical problems well sorted with our easy-to-follow guide to the Net

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

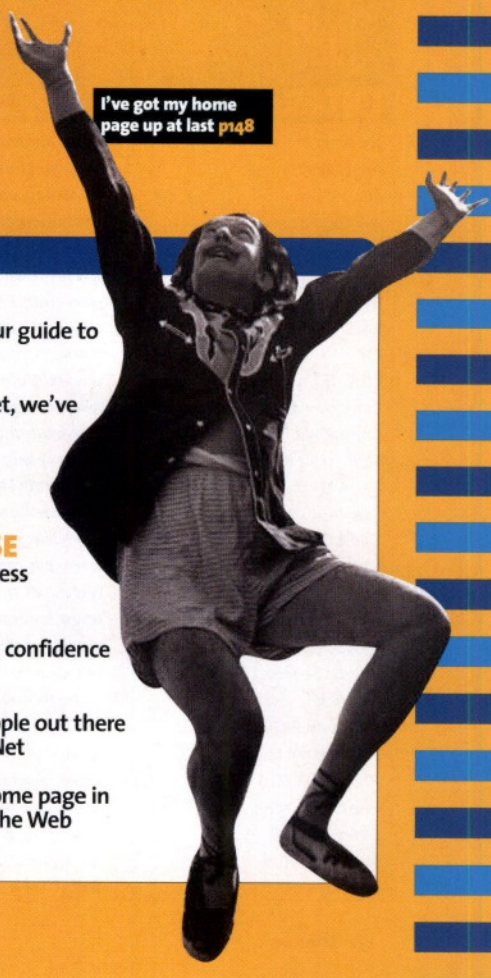
The Internet is a huge global network of computers, with literally millions of machines connected together across the planet.

HOW DO I GET ON IT?

All you really need is a computer, a modem, an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and a telephone line.

WHAT CAN I DO THERE?

1 **Surf the Worldwide Web.**
2 Send someone an email.
3 **Take part in a newsgroup discussion.**



I've got my home page up at last p148

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Setting yourself up with Outlook Express

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148 SITE BUILDER Build your own home page in minutes with easy-to-use tools from the Web

surprise yourself
Insert this disc no
and get LineOne
FREE for one month
We'll prove we give you more
than any other internet provider.
They'll do anything to get you online
free easy fun
in home
the free internet service!

What Service Provider?

October 1999 Those ISPs are simply queuing up for you. How do you find the right one for you? Simple, consult our easy-to-follow guide

What is an ISP?

An Internet service provider, or ISP, is a company that connects you to the Internet. All you need do is exploit the provider's permanent Net connection by connecting to it.

Get the best ISP deal

Right now, literally hundreds of ISPs are vying for your business – which is great news for consumers. But to help you make a truly informed decision, we've tested the best service providers on the market.

Below, you'll find our ratings for the current crop of the best ISPs looking to connect you. There are several companies that are now trialling completely free access – and that includes the price of the phone call that connects you to the Internet. LocalTel pioneered this service back in the spring with the launch of Screaming.Net. But there is a catch – in order to qualify for the free calls, Screaming.Net users must change over to LocalTel from their existing telephone company.

This new breed of ISP is set to change the landscape of Net access in the UK, as several other service providers investigate the possibility of offering completely free access in a bid to keep up with new trends. In other words, the future couldn't be brighter for Net consumers, as the price of getting online continues to go down and down.

Call costs

Before you start, it's worth checking how much you'll be paying for the phone calls that connect you to the Net. Nearly every ISP charges local call rates. For BT customers, this means 4p/min on weekdays between 8am-6pm, 1.5p/min during off peak times, and 1p/min at the weekend. If you are with a cable service, then it's best to check with the individual company.

Speeding up

To say things are only going to get faster is an understatement. BT's ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) offers an 'always on' high speed connection to the Internet with data delivery speeds of 10-40 times a conventional modem. At the moment, most modems operate at 56kbps (kilobits per second) or less. For more info on its launch, see ***www.bt.com/adsl/***

BEGINNER'S TIP

Put the phone number you use to dial up to the Internet on your BT Friends and Family list.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Set up several free accounts. If for any reason you cannot connect to one provider, simply try another one. There's no limit to how many accounts you have.,

ADVANCED TIP

Consider installing an extra phone line. It means you can have one for the phone and one for your modem, so you can use the Internet as much as you like.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
Aardvark **FREE**	***www.aardvaak.co.uk***	London-based ISP which promises no banner advertising	Unlimited
AngliaNet Limited	***www.anglianet.co.uk***	Dial-up, web hosting and design for home and business users	Unlimited
AOL	***www.aol.co.uk***	A large ISP offering proprietary software to try to make connecting painless	Unlimited
Aviators Network	***www.aviators.net***	An ISP designed with aircraft related content for the pilot and the enthusiast	Unlimited
BREATHE **FREE**	***www.breathe.co.uk***	Well-established free ISP. Easy-to-use site design	Unlimited
BT Click **FREE**	***www.btclick.com***	Designed for experienced users (no tech support)	Pay As You Go
BT Internet	***www.btinternet.com***	Another Internet arm of BT offering a full access package	Unlimited
CALLNET **FREE**	***www.callnetuk.com***	Innovative free ISP offering enhanced web based services	Unlimited
CIX	***www.cix.co.uk***	The Compulink Information eXchange. Provides Internet conferencing accounts	Unlimited
ClaraNET Ltd	***www.clara.net***	Subscription based ISP with a range of account options to suit any needs	Unlimited
Compuserve	***www.compuserve.com***	Long-standing ISP who offers proprietary software to aid ease-of-use and level of service	Unlimited
Currantbun **FREE**	***www.currantbun.com***	The free ISP offering of *The Sun* newspaper	Unlimited
CYBERphile Internet	***www.cyberphile.co.uk***	Business-oriented, Midlands-based provider. Specialists in leased lines, LANs, firewalls, ISDN etc	Unlimited
Dabsol **FREE**	***www.dabsol.net***	Free ISP with online sign-up help and comprehensive features	Unlimited
Demon Internet	***www.demon.co.uk***	The UK's original dial-up account today aspires to be the industry's 'Premium' service	Unlimited
Direct Connection	***www.dircon.net***	Home and business ISP offering global roaming among their services	Unlimited
Easynet Ltd	***www.easynet.net***	Subscription based dial-up service. Winner of best European ISP at this year's ISPA awards	Unlimited
EidosNet **FREE**	***www.eidosnet.co.uk***	EidosNet is brought to you by Eidos, publishers of Tomb Raider and other great games	Unlimited
Enterprise plc	***www.enterprise.net***	Subscription based ISP with a host of features including game and news servers	Unlimited
F9 Free **FREE**	***www.f9.net.uk***	Free ISP from previously subscription only service Force 9	Unlimited
Firstnet Services Ltd	***www.firstnet.co.uk***	Business Internet solution provider	Unlimited
FirstWeb	***www.first-web.co.uk***	ISP based in Middlesex. Provides Internet solutions for businesses	Unlimited
FREE 4 ALL **FREE**	***www.free4all.co.uk***	Free ISP with online registration. C&W backbone and a commitment to free access/tech support	Unlimited
Free Internet **FREE**	***www.free-internet.co.uk***	Free access, free mail and Web space. Comprehensive service in a neat package	Unlimited
FREENET **FREE**	***www.freenet.co.uk***	More free access with a gaming bias. Online auto sign-up and newsgroups add to the interest	Unlimited
Free Online **FREE**	***www.free-online.net***	Straightforward free ISP offering news and email	Unlimited
Freeserve **FREE**	***www.freeserve.net***	Free provider from the Dixons group of companies	Unlimited
Free to You **FREE**	***www.free2you.co.uk***	No frills free ISP with online sign-up	Unlimited
Freeway **FREE**	***www.freewayuk.com***	Free access, free mail and Web space. Comprehensive service in a neat package	Unlimited

ISPs explained Using our easy-to-follow guide

FREE CONNECTIONS
There are now many companies that will get you onto the Internet without charging a subscription fee – the only thing you pay for is the price of the phone call that connects you.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
Despite the plethora of free ISPs springing up, there are still many which charge a flat monthly fee. These generally offer free technical support, whereas most free ISPs charge by the minute.

CONTENT PROVIDERS
Content providers also charge to get you online, but provide exclusive content to members, and a sense of 'community'.

How the tables work

Description
A brief description of the services offered by the ISP in question.

Type of service
Tells you whether there is any restriction on how often you can use the Internet.

Phone number
The number to ring if you want to sign up.

Email addresses
Some service providers give you only one email address, others provide as many as you want.

Content
Outlines whether the service provider in question provides its own content and whether it is exclusive to its users.

Macintosh support
Not all service providers offer software and technical support for Macs, preferring to concentrate on PCs – so be sure to check this column out if you're an Apple user.

Web space
If you are interested in designing your own Web page, most Internet Service Providers will give you space to store it on. 2Mb should be enough for most people's requirements.

Set-up fee
Some ISPs charge a fee to open an account.

Monthly charge
If you don't go with a free ISP, then you'll pay a set amount per month to be online.

Phone support charges
Technical support is great – as long as you're not having to pay a fortune to benefit from it. Find out how much free service providers charge per minute for calls to their technical support desks.

Telephone support hours
The hours when the technical support desk will be open to take your calls.

Our ISP testing is carried out by NetBasics, an independent company specialising in providing ISP information for consumers and businesses. NetBasics makes every effort to ensure that the data presented to you is correct. The publishers of *the Net* and NetBasics cannot be held liable for any damages caused by the publication of this data. Any Internet service provider that wishes to be included in the evaluation programme should contact eval@netbasics.com **For more information on NetBasics, visit its Web site at *www.netbasics.com*.**

PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
Sign up online	1	None	No	0	0	0	Unavailable	n/a
01473 211922	1	None	Yes	5Mb	None	11.75	Mobile	9-5 M-F, 8-9 S-S
0800 3765432	5	Massive amount of content	Yes	10Mb	0	16.95	Free	8-10.30M-F 9-9.30S-S
0700 2842867	1	'Flightalogue' lists a host of goodies	No	15Mb	0	11.75	Standard	9-9 7 days
0870 6006006	5	Entertainment, sport, shopping, finance etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up online	0	None	No	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
0800 800001	5	None	Yes	10Mb	0	11.75	Local	24/7
0171 3358300	5	Chat servers, channels, services, Web news	Yes	20Mb	0	0	Free	24/7
0845 3555050	Unlimited	None	Yes	30Mb	0	17.61	Local call	9-10 M-F, 12-6 S-S
0800 3582828	Unlimited	None	Yes	25Mb	0	8.99	Free	24/7
0990 000200	5	A large range of channels and a search engine	No	10Mb	0	16.95	National	8-12 Midnight
0845 3063636	5	Online dating, Bunshopping, *The Sun* online etc	Yes	25Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
01543 454840	1	None	Yes	0.1Mb	0	11.74	Standard	8.30-6 M-F
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	Unlimited	0	0	Metered	24/7
0181 3711234	Unlimited	None	Yes	20Mb	0	11.75	Local	24/7
0800 0720000	Unlimited	User zone containing handy member services	Yes	20Mb	0	13.5	Local	9-9 7days
0171 6814444	Unlimited	None	Yes	2Mb	0	11.99	Free	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	Free access to the Mplayer games network	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
01624 677666	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	11.75	Local	9-10 M-F 10-4 S-S
0800 0737800	Unlimited	None	Yes	15Mb	0	0	National	7-11, 7 Days
0113 294 4224	Unlimited	Search engines and support	Yes	10Mb	0	12.50	Local	Business hours
0870 7409223	4	None	No	5Mb	0	7.73	Local	24/7
01303 775500	Unlimited	Multiplayer Games Server. Email fax system	Yes	10Mb	0	0	0845 access	8-12 Midnight
Sign up online	1	Newsgroups & IE5 download	No	10Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
01329 511611	Unlimited	Games links and independent status	Yes	20Mb	0	0	National rates	9-6 7 days
0870 7060504	5	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	Premium rate	24/7
0990 500049	Unlimited	Extensive channel based content	Yes	15Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	Search engine page and technical support	No	10Mb	0	0	Available soon	n/a
0990 500049	Unlimited	Includes news, sport, weather, shopping	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
Freezone **FREE**	***www.freezone.co.uk***	A free ISP offering the usual package in a smart format	Unlimited
Gateway 2000 **FREE**	***www.ukgateway.net***	An ISP service from the hardware retailers of the same name. Packaged with Gateway computers	Unlimited
Gifford Internet	***www.gifford.co.uk***	Bespoke Internet solutions for business, educational and home users	Unlimited
Go Free **FREE**	***www.gofree.co.uk***	Free ISP offering online signup, complete with helpline	Unlimited
IC24 **FREE**	***www.ic24.net***	The free ISP service of Mirror Group Newspapers	Unlimited
LineOne **FREE**	***www.lineone.net***	British Telecom's Internet service has recently dropped its subscription	Unlimited
London Web Comm Ltd	***www.londonweb.net***	An emphasis on corporate clientele. Useful London Local Directory	Unlimited
Moose	***www.moose.co.uk***	ISP specifically dedicated to serving Watford	Unlimited
Netcom	***www.netcom.net.uk***	A comprehensive range of services to the home and business user	Unlimited
OrbitalNet **FREE**	***www.orbitalnet.co.uk***	ISP with focus on providing quality services	Unlimited
Paradise Internet Network Service	***www.pins.co.uk***	Paradise Internet is a subscription provider which also authors software	Unlimited
Sniff Out **FREE**	***www.sniffout.net***	Shopping-based free ISP with member offers	Unlimited
Sonnet Internet Ltd	***www.sonnet.co.uk***	Packages and solutions for the private and business user	Unlimited
This is it! **FREE**	***www.thisisit.co.uk***	End-user targeted free ISP	Unlimited
UK Fantastic **FREE**	***www.ukfantastic.net***	Spirited free ISP offering good online technical help	Unlimited
UK Online Ltd **FREE**	***www.ukonline.co.uk***	A family friendly free ISP with plenty of shareware & gaming software. Sign up online	Unlimited
UK People **FREE**	***www.ukpeople.net***	Free ISP, online chat, set-up and help	Unlimited
Virgin Net **FREE**	***www.virgin.net***	Long standing ISP now offering a stylish free Internet access service	Unlimited
Which? Online	***www.which.net***	A free ISP from the consumer affairs magazine of the same name	Unlimited
Wireplay Internet **FREE**	***www.wireplay.com***	Wireplay is an online games network offering access to Intranet based fast games servers	Unlimited
X-Stream Network **FREE**	***www.x-stream.com***	Offers enhanced member services such as occasional free phone calls to the Net	Unlimited

Network performance

October 1999

Independent testing carried out by NetBasics – contact eval@netbasics.com

We test the best ISPs in the country for the reliability and speed of their connection. The tests are conducted in three areas and a star rating is given indicative of their performance. The three areas of testing are:

VARIATION IN MODEM SPEED

This is a gauge to measure whether you will get a constant speed once a modem connects to your ISP. ISPs should offer a constant speed and we measure any variation. Each ISP starts with a potential 100 per-cent and loses position the greater the variance in connection. This is achieved by comparison so that no ISP is favoured.

VARIATION IN TIME TO CONNECT

This part of the test measures the variation in how long it takes to get connected to your ISP. The reading is taken from the stage between clicking 'Connect' and then physically connecting.

AVAILABILITY

There's nothing more frustrating than dialling up to your ISP and finding you can't actually get through and onto the Internet. This area measures how many times an ISP refuses to connect, either through engaged tones, or if it does not respond correctly to the signals from your modem.

The results are combined into a single reading giving us a fair way to chart ISPs based on all relevant aspects of their dial-in service.

The results are based on a sample of 50 ISPs from our ongoing tests.

DABSOL

About our Free service

Free Internet Access
Join the Internet revolution and pay not one penny in subscription charges or online charges

Free Unlimited Webspace
Feeling creative? Build your own web site and don't worry about how big it is.

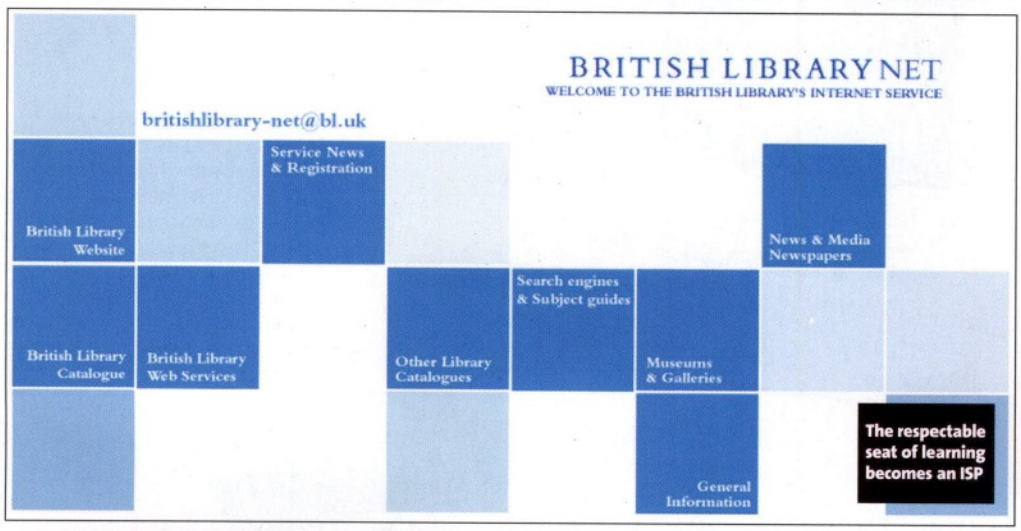
Free E-mail addresses
Unlimited aliases and 5 POP3 mailboxes. Give your whole family their own e-mail address and mailbox.

1	Dabsol	27	Aviators Network
2	Enterprise	28	Paradise Internet
3	This is IT	29	EidosNet
4	Cyberphile	30	Easynet
5	Demon Internet	31	Which? Online
6	IC24	32	Sonnet Internet
7	Free-Internet	33	Gifford
8	CIX	34	Direct Connection
9	AOL	35	FreeZone
10	Moose	36	First Web
11	Free2you	37	AngliaNet
12	UK Online	38	Gateway 2000
13	Sniff out	39	CurrantBun
14	Netcom	40	LineOne
15	UK Fantastic	41	UK People
16	Freenet	42	Freeserve
17	London Web	43	Wireplay
18	X-Stream	44	Compuserve
19	Freewire	45	Aardvaak
20	Firstnet Services	46	OrbitalNnet
21	ClaraNet	47	F9 Free
22	Freeway UK	48	Virgin Net
23	Go Free	49	BT Internet
24	Breathe	50	Free-Online.net
25	BT Click		
26	CallNet		

what service provider?

PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
0870 7441111	Unlimited	On site search engine access	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
At Gateway Stores	Unlimited	None	No	10Mb	0	0	Free	24/7
0845 1110032	3	None	No	30Mb	0	8.50	Local 0845	10-12/2-9, M-F
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
0870 9090262	Unlimited	Channel based content with news, sport, weather	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0800 111210	5	News, shopping, sport, community etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	8-Midnight M-Sa
0181 3494500	3	None	Yes	5Mb	17.63	14.68	Standard	9-9 M-Sa
0181 5668008	3	None	Yes	10Mb	0	11.75	Watford Local	8.30-6.30 M-F
0870 5668008	20	A business oriented portal site	Yes	25Mb	0	14.95	National	24/7
01233 646505	5	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	Local	Business hours
01256 414863	1	None	Yes	2Mb	17.63	9.4	National	11-7 M-F
Sign up online	Unlimited	Based on shopping and entertainment	Yes	20Mb	0	0	Local 0845	8-9, 7 days
0171 8912000	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	12.50	National	9-9 M-S
0906 9124000	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
01749 333333	1	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	An online community, games and downloads	No	5Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0500 558800	5	Several Virgin channels	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0645 830240	1	Online shopping and consumer affairs content	Yes	2Mb	11.75	14.75	Free	24/7
0845 757 7577	0	Games news, games chat, games add-ons	No	0	0	0	50p per minute	12pm-12 am, 7 days
0870 7306466	1	Chat, news, lifestyle, shopping, etc	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7

ISP NEWS IN BRIEF All the service provider news you need



BROUGHT TO BOOK **The British Library has joined the free Internet service party with British Library Net. As well as the usual features that come with free Internet access, the service will offer access to OPAC – the Library's online catalogue – and a variety of other library services.** ***www.britishlibrary.net***

WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Huge new e-commerce site Jungle.com has launched a free ISP. Junglelink.net offers an incentive scheme to users with subscribers awarded loyalty points for every 15 minutes they spend online. Loyalty points can then be swapped for discounts on products such as computer bits, CDs or console games from Jungle.com.

www.junglelink.net

Free trips to the jungle with Junglelink

MASTER OF YOUR DOMAIN

Free ISP Freenetname is offering users a no-charge *.co.uk* domain name – the main part of a Web address, such as ***www.domain.co.uk*** – as long as accounts are used every 90 days. This can mean a big saving – registering a domain usually costs well in excess of £40.

www.freenetname.co.uk

AUNTIE BEEB JOINS THE FRAY

The BBC has finally joined the free ISP club with freebeeb.net. Provided by BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the BBC, no public money will be used to fund the service.

The Beeb: yet another free ISP

www.beeb.net

CHARITY BEGINS AT YOUR ISP

High Street supermarket and ISP Waitrose is donating its share of revenue from call charges to charity. The Red Cross, British Heart Foundation, Macmillan Cancer Relief and the Prince's Trust all stand to gain, and users can vote for where they would like their money to go.

www.waitrose.com

What kit?

Whether you're upgrading your system or starting out from scratch, we've got a great Net-ready set-up to suit your needs

Your current PC is straining under the weight of all this frenetic activity on the Net. And while you've got the money to upgrade, you don't know what to buy. Which is where *the net* comes to the rescue. On these pages, we've suggested outfits to suit depending on your budget and requirements.

The 'Family Starter' pack provides the bare bones of the basic family Internet set-up – perfect for keeping the kids happy, or staying in touch with friends from foreign climes. 'The Sky's The Limit' set-up is designed for lovers of gadgets, add-ons and status symbols, while 'On The Move' shows you how to take your Net connection anywhere.

Meanwhile, you'll need the more mysterious terms explained:

RAM (random-access memory) is your computer's working memory, used for temporary data storage while programs are in use. The more RAM it has, the more things your computer can do at once. RAM is measured in megabytes (Mb).

Your **hard disk**, also known as the hard drive, is the long-term store for all your computer's information and programs. The bigger your hard disk, the more info it can hold. Applications and every other file you have on your machine take up storage space – so the more of it you have available, the better. The capacity of your hard disk is measured in gigabytes (Gb). The **processor** or **CPU** (central processing unit) is what powers your computer and controls its operation. Its processing power is measured in megaHertz (MHz). The higher the figure, the faster your computer works.

A **modem** lets your computer talk with others via phone lines and the Net. Its speed is rated in kilobits per second (kbps). The higher the speed your modem can work at (56kbps is the fastest), the faster data can be transferred from the Internet to your computer.

THE 'STARTING OUT' SYSTEM

The complete family home computing solution giving you the freedom to work, play and get on the Net. **The most you'll spend: £2,040**

COMPUTER

Dell produces an outstanding range of computers, and the L466C is a real cracker. Shopping at Dell's Web site, we specified that this 466MHz Celeron-based machine (which gives blistering performance) should have a total of 128Mb of RAM, Dell's 17-inch monitor, an internal CD-ROM drive and a pair of speakers and a microphone, and it still cost us just £1,004.63 (inc VAT) plus shipping. You can customise your machine to your heart's content before you buy on Dell's Web site at www.dell.co.uk.

Price £1,004.63
Phone 0870 1524699

SCANNER

If you're designing your own Web pages, you may want to add some pics from the family album online. Or perhaps you'd like to send photos to relatives via email. The Umax 2000U should do fine.

Price £79
Phone 01344 871329

MODEM

3Com's 56K Voice Faxmodem is a super little device with great performance. If you want to access the Web or send and receive faxes, you can't go wrong with this beauty.

Price £199
Phone virtually any reseller will supply this; try Dabs Direct on 0800 558866

PRINTER

You'll need something with which to output your letters, drawings and so on – and the Epson Stylus Photo 750 is a great choice. It gives clear colour reproduction, and great colour accuracy, all at a reasonable price.

Price £207.97 (inc VAT, approx)
Phone again, try Dabs Direct

DIGITAL CAMERA

Olympus Camedia C-900 Zoom was featured in the September issue's digital camera test. It handles well and the picture quality is good. It can store 60 images.

Price £549.99
Phone 0800 0720070

...WHEN THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

Splash out on a powerful Internet set-up – surf the Net, play games, jazz up your site and show off to your friends. **The most you'll spend: £3,450**

PC

The Dan Ultimate is hard to beat for power at a reasonable price. It comes with a range of processors up to a 500MHz Pentium III, 128Mb of RAM, a 13Gb hard drive, a fast video card, and it even has a Zip drive and a modem included. Prices start at £1,298 inc VAT; the 500MHz Pentium III costs £1,555 inc VAT. You can have one built to your own specification at www.dan.co.uk.
Price £1,298 or £1,555, both inc VAT
Phone 0181 830 1100

WEBCAM

Post your Webcam on your site so the whole world can see what's going on in your office, or use it for videochat with friends and colleagues around the world. Just plug in this Logitech QuickCam Home and you're away.
Price £99.95
Telephone 01306 734300

DIGITAL CAMERA

Canon's PowerShot Pro 70 gives super quality images, and plenty of great features. It's also got space for two storage cards so you can store more of your favourite photos.
Price £1,173
Phone 0121 680 8062

SCANNER

Unless you want to spend thousands on a scanner, this will do you just fine. It's the Umax 1400U providing great quality at a very reasonable price.
Price £299
Phone 01344 871329

PDA

The Psion Series 5mx recently had a makeover with a faster processor and a slick new design.
Price £429.95
Phone 0990 143050

ACCESSORIES

The Kensington WebRacer has preset buttons you can program to take you directly to your favourite sites.
Price £49.99
Phone 01296 397444

PRINTER

If you want photo-realistic colour output, the Epson Stylus range of printers has a device to suit most budgets – and they're easy to use.
Price from £101
Phone 0800 220456

WIRED ON THE MOVE

Just because you're away, it doesn't mean going without Net access. Here's what you'll need to go mobile. **The most you'll spend: £2,370**

PDA

If a laptop's too big, how about a PDA (personal digital assistant)? Try a Compaq Aero 2100 or the nifty Philips Nino.
Compaq price £350
Phone 0845 2704222
Philips price £365
Phone 0171 7440095

DIGITAL CAMERA

Nikon's CoolPix 700 takes brilliant pictures and there's a cut-down version of the Adobe Photoshop thrown in.
Price £499.99
Phone 0800 220230

MOUSE

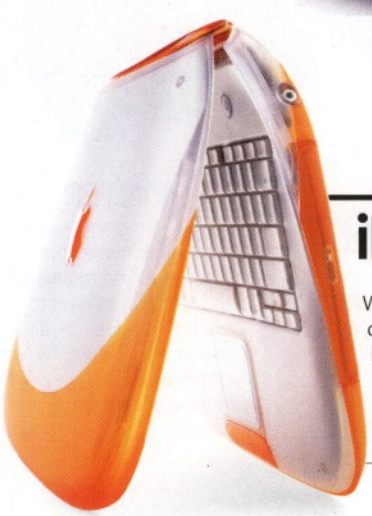
If you don't get on with your laptop's touchpad, you'll need a mouse – Logitech's Wheelmouse for Notebooks includes a wheel for scrolling without scroll bars.
Price £24.99
Phone 01306 734300

LAPTOP

Sony's VAIO range has been hailed as providing some of the most exciting laptops over the past year, and you could do a lot worse than choose any one of them. This C1 model boasts a built-in camera and a simple to use voice memo facility. Throw in a 266MHz processor, a 4.3 Gb hard drive and 64 Mb of RAM and the fact that it only weighs 1.1kg, and this has to go on your Christmas present list.
Price £1,350
Phone 0990 424424

MOBILE PHONE

Still overladen? Ericsson's I1888 World mobile phone might help. Its GSM technology lets it receive calls on five different continents.
Price £129.99
Phone 0990 237237



iBOOK Performance to match the design

Whether you like the fruity colours or not, the new Apple iBook is ideal for people on the move. It has a 12.1 inch screen, a 300MHz G3 processor and contains a 56.6kbps modem. If you don't like having phone cables plugged in to your laptop, buy the Apple AirPort to go with it. The AirPort plugs in to your phone socket and transmits the data direct to your iBook within a range of 150 feet. And you get a choice of blueberry and tangerine as well.
Price £1,249
Phone 0870 6006010

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Online Domain Name Registration

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Real-Time Online Setup
Web & Email Forwarding
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Web browsers

There's more to browsing that Navigator and Explorer. What about the rebel-rousing Lynx or perhaps the truly explosive Surf Monkey?

What do I use to explore the Web?

The software you use to look at pages on the Web is called a 'browser'. The most popular are Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. If you have a PC running Windows 95 or 98, you will almost certainly have Internet Explorer already installed. However, Navigator and other browsers such as Opera run in much the same way.

What are my options?

Statistically, Internet Explorer is the most popular browser on the planet. Together with its nearest competitor, Netscape Navigator, it accounts for 97 percent of all Web page hits.

With the facilities that the two offer, it's hardly surprising that they rule the roost. Internet Explorer 5.0 is the current leader of the Internet pack. It's packed – jam-packed, in fact – with features.

Netscape Navigator 4.08 represents the only serious competition to Internet Explorer. But it still can't reach the dizzying heights of IE – in fact it's slipped so much in popularity that Web site designers now often make sure their pages look right in IE alone.

You would've thought that with the market pretty much sewn up between the big two, no-one would be foolhardy enough to attempt to write a rival browser – but there are others. Opera, for example, is a tiny little number at 1.5Mb (compared with Netscape Communicator's 10Mb+). It's fast, but it's let down by an ugly look. The Opera equivalent for Macs is iCab. It has many of the excellent features of Opera, but it looks and works even better.

If you want a real rebel browser, try Lynx. It's text only, so it cuts down on download times. For children (or adults who are kids at heart), there's Surf Monkey, which lets you blow up Web pages you don't like, or gloop green paint all over them.

Saving sites in Internet Explorer

Typing in the name of a Web site every time you want to visit it can be a pain – especially if it's a long and complex name. Fortunately, all Web browsers have a way of saving the locations of sites you like, so you can revisit them without needing to retype them. In Internet Explorer these saved site addresses are called Favourites, while Netscape Navigator calls them Bookmarks.

1 From the Favourites menu, choose 'Add to Favourite.' The keyboard shortcut for the move is Control D.

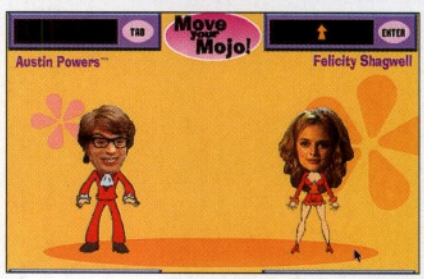
2 When asked whether you want to subscribe to the site, choose the 'No, just add this page to my Favourites' option. You'll see the title of the page in the 'Name' section of the site; if this is not descriptive enough for you, type a five or six word description of the site. Then hit OK.

3 You will now find that the site has been added to your Favourites menu. To visit the site, just click 'Favourites' and then go to the menu list and select it.

Supercharge your browser

Your basic Internet Explorer set-up comes with several 'plug-ins'. These are additional pieces of software which enable your browser to play, for example, multimedia effects contained in some Web sites. If you arrive at a site requiring a plug-in that you don't have, you'll be prompted to download and install it.

The essential plug-ins you'll need to get the most from your browsing include: RealPlayer, which lets you watch videos or listen to music Shockwave, for animation and sound; and QuickTime, which plays video and sound.



Installing a plug-in

1 When you visit a site requiring a plug-in, a prompt appears. Click 'Get Plug-in' and you'll be taken to the plug-in's home page.

2 Click on the link where you can 'Get' or 'Download' the plug-in.

3 Explorer will automatically put the plug-in inside the correct folder on your PC.

4 Go back to the Web site by pressing the Back button on the Explorer toolbar and enjoy it in its full glory.

Browser alternatives

Proof that there's more to life than Explorer or Netscape

BROWSER	RATING	FOR	AGAINST	DOWNLOAD FROM
MAC BROWSERS				
ICAB	★★★★	Fast. Gets rid of irritating ad banners	Could support more features	www.icab.de
HOTJAVA 3.0	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow; somewhat unstable	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER 4.5	★★★★	State-of-the-art browsing on the Mac	Can be memory-hungry	www.microsoft.com/Mac/IE/
LYNX	★★★★	Blazingly fast at fact-finding	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	www.lirmm.fr/~gutkneco/maclynx/
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR 4.08	★★★	It's almost as good as IE...	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com
PC BROWSERS				
AMAYA	★★	Great for those into Net standards...	...not for those who aren't	www.w3.org/Amaya/User/BinDist.html
ARACHNE	★★	It runs in DOS and is written by Czechs	A pain to set up	arachne.cz
CUSTOM BROWSER	★	Adds minimal extra customisation to IE	It's just IE with an ad in the top panel	www.custombrowser.com
HOTJAVA 3.0	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow, though not as bad as on the Mac	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER 5.0	★★★★★	For the moment, the king of all browsers	Hard to fault, unless you really try	www.microsoft.com
LYNX	★★★★	The original text-only browser	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	lynx.browser.org
MOSAIC	★★★	Good for developers	Feels old. Is old. Not updated since 1996	www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/mosaic-w/
NEOPLANET	★★★★	Funky interface replacement for Explorer	Internet Explorer in new clothes	www.neoplanet.com
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR 4.08	★★★★	Wide range of features for hardcore users	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com
OPERA	★★★★	Faster than IE or Netscape	Looks absolutely horrible	www.opera.com
SURF MONKEY	★★★★★	Lots of fun – blowing up sites is great	Designed for smaller screens?	www.surfmonkey.com

*free 30-day trial version available

What all those browser buttons mean

Understanding the toolbar

BACK Clicking this button takes you back to the last page. Click it once and you'll go back one page, or hold to see the last 10

STOP If you decide that you don't want to view a page while it's loading, just hit Stop

HOME This button takes you to the page you viewed when you started your browser

FAVOURITES Pop-up window containing a list of your Favourite sites – or you can view them from the menu

MAIL Opens your email program

PRINT Prints the page

GO When you've entered an address, hit Enter or click here to go to the site

LINKS A quick shortcut to some of your favourite sites, which you can add to

FORWARD If you've used the Back button to move back a page or two, the Forward button should take you back again

REFRESH This makes the browser redraw the page on the screen – useful if you have stopped a page from loading

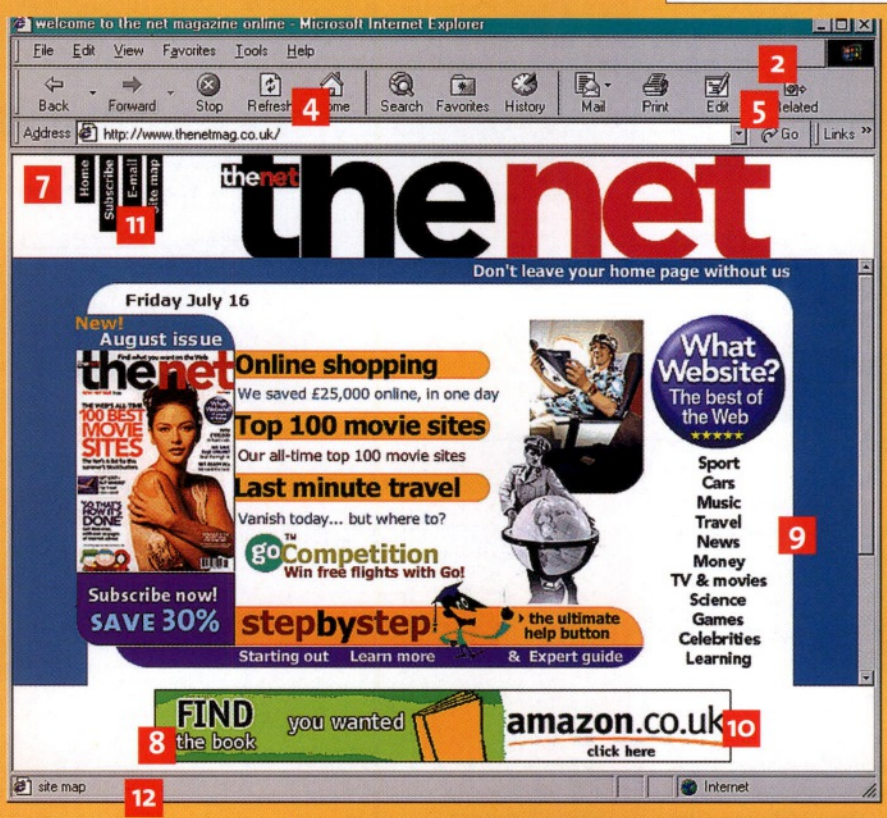
SEARCH This button opens Internet Explorer's search options where you'll find short-cuts to finding what you want on the Internet

HISTORY Clicking this button produces a list of all the sites visited over the past few days or weeks – so if you found a really useful page two days ago but forgot to add it to your Favourites list, you can easily find it again by looking here

EDIT If you have a Web page editor, you can edit a Web page by clicking here

RELATED SITES Launches the Explorer 'Alexa' plug-in which provides extra search options

Viewing your browser



1 TITLE BAR
Tells you the name of the site you're visiting and the program you're currently using

2 MENU BAR
The range of options you can use while navigating the Internet, including your Favourites menu

3 IE LOGO
Contains a link to the MSN home page, in case you're completely lost

4 ADDRESS
The address of the site you're opening, including the http:// prefix

5 GO BUTTON
IE5 feature: click to go to the address you've typed in (or hit the Return key)

6 LINKS BUTTON
IE5 feature: shortcut to the 'Links' option within your Favourites folder

7 WEB SITE WINDOW
The whole page you're opening, including ads and links to other sites

8 BANNER ADVERTISEMENT
Click here to visit the service advertised in this small banner

9 INDEX
What you'll find on the site. Click on an option to enter it

10 TEXT LINKS
Move your cursor to the underlined text and you'll be able to open the relevant link just by clicking on it

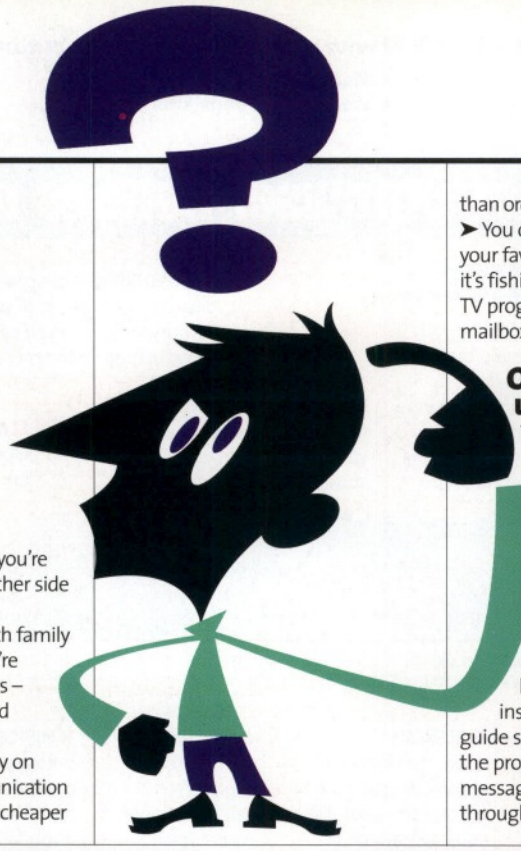
11 EMAIL FEEDBACK
Most Web sites allow you to send them questions and enquiries.

12 DOWNLOAD DATA
This space tells you what Explorer is doing – or which site it could open when your cursor passes over a link

JARGON BUSTERS

DOWNLOAD Retrieve a page or file from across the Internet
HOME PAGE The initial page of a site you see when you connect
HTTP Short for HyperText **TRANSFER PROTOCOL** The way your browser pulls in Web pages
WEB PAGE Web sites are divided up into 'pages'. Each page contains a link to another page, building up a 'web'
URL Short for Uniform Resource Locator. A technical term for a Web address
WWW Short for World Wide Web – found in addresses

Email



Still not got round to setting up your Outlook Express yet? Follow our guide

What is email?

Email is a way of sending messages around the Internet. While early programs could only handle plain text, most can now carry pictures, and even video clips and sound.

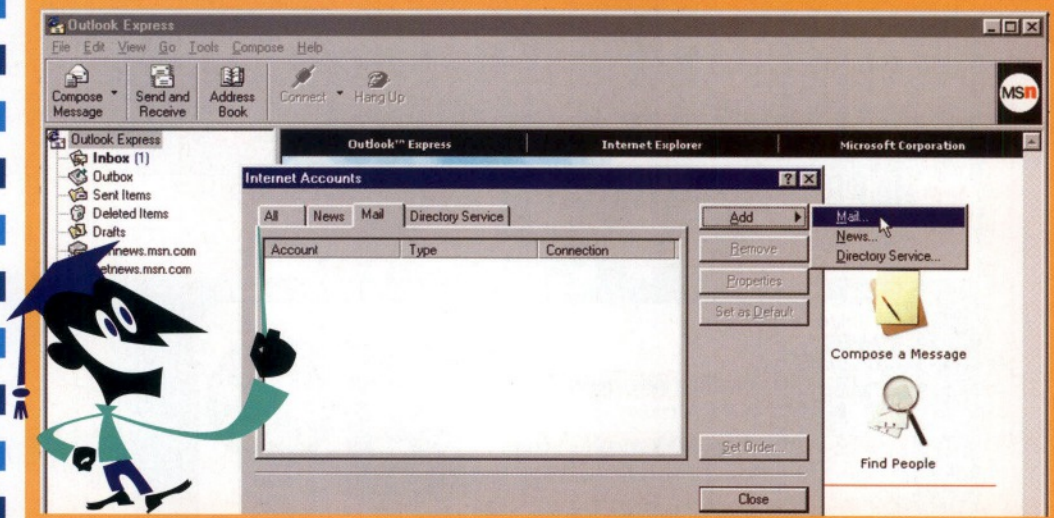
So why should I use it?

➤ It's a lot cheaper to email a friend than to phone them long distance.
➤ It's delivered almost instantly – there's no seven-day wait if you're emailing someone on the other side of the globe.
➤ You can keep in touch with family and friends, even while they're away on business or holidays – they can visit a cybercafé and check their mail from there.
➤ Many companies now rely on email as a means of communication because it's much faster and cheaper than ordinary or 'snail mail'.
➤ You can have information on your favourite subjects – whether it's fishing, the stock market, or a TV programme – delivered to your mailbox every day.

Okay, so how do I use it?

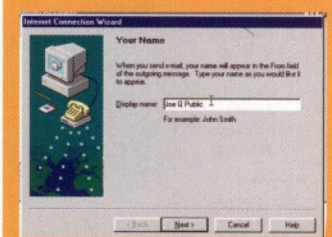
There are lots of email packages, but the one most widely used is Microsoft's Outlook Express. If you've bought a PC in the last two or three years, or you've downloaded Microsoft Internet Explorer for either Mac or PC, you'll already have Outlook Express installed. Our step-by-step guide shows you how to configure the program, create an email message, send it, and then read through the mail you've been sent.

1 Getting started with Outlook Express

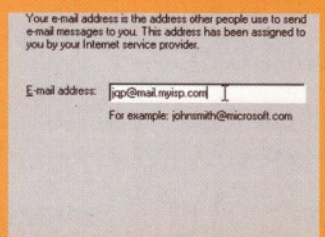


1 From the Start menu on your desktop, click Programs and then Outlook Express. If you are asked where you want it to store messages, select the pre-set or 'default' folder. The folder is kept in the Program Files folder on your hard drive.

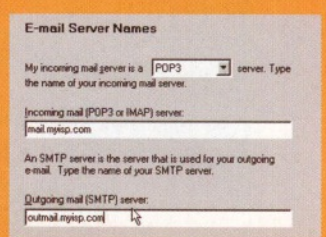
2 Once Outlook Express has loaded go to the Accounts box from the Tools menu, and click the Mail tab shown in the picture on the left. This will show you any mail accounts you already have set up, and allows you to create a new one. For the purposes of this exercise we are going to create a new email account. Next, click Add, and select Mail.



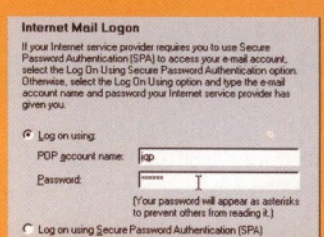
3 The Internet Connection Wizard will now guide you through the steps you need to take. First, enter your full name.


Your e-mail address is the address other people use to send e-mail messages to you. This address has been assigned to you by your Internet service provider.
E-mail address:
jqp@mail.myisp.com
For example: johnsmith@microsoft.com

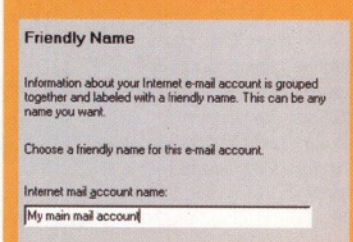
4 Type in your email address. This will have been given to you by your Internet service provider or ISP.


E-mail Server Names
My incoming mail server is a POP3 server. Type the name of your incoming mail server.
Incoming mail (POP3 or IMAP) server:
mail.myisp.com
An SMTP server is the server that is used for your outgoing e-mail. Type the name of your SMTP server.
Outgoing mail (SMTP) server:
outmail.myisp.com

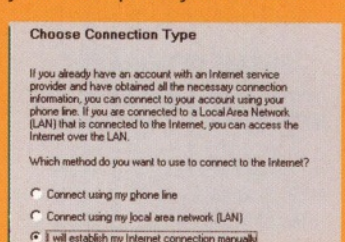
5 Enter the names of the email POP3/IMAP server in order to get incoming and outgoing mail. Call your ISP's helpline if you're unsure.


Internet Mail Logon
Log on using:
POP account name:
jqp
Password:
(Your password will appear as asterisks to prevent others from reading it.)
Log on using Secure Password Authentication (SPA)

6 Type in your email address – just the part before the '@' sign – and your password. Again, your ISP should have given you these details.


Friendly Name
Information about your Internet e-mail account is grouped together and labeled with a friendly name. This can be any name you want.
Choose a friendly name for this e-mail account.
Internet mail account name:
My main mail account

7 Outlook Express asks for a 'friendly name' to give to your email account. We've called ours 'My main email account' for simplicity.


Choose Connection Type
If you already have an account with an Internet service provider and have obtained all the necessary connection information, you can connect to your account using your phone line. If you are connected to a Local Area Network (LAN) that is connected to the Internet, you can access the Internet over the LAN.
Which method do you want to use to connect to the Internet?
Connect using my phone line
Connect using my local area network (LAN)
I will establish my Internet connection manually

8 Outlook Express can automatically dial into your ISP for you, but it's probably best to connect manually. You can use Outlook offline, writing and managing your mail and then connect in order to send and receive messages. Choose the 'I will establish my Internet connection manually' option.

MORE EMAIL HELP AND ADVICE @ www.thenetmag.co.uk/helpbutton/

- ★ Creating an email address book
- ★ Email etiquette
- ★ Filtering your email messages
- ★ Sending pictures and files via email

BEGINNER'S TIP

Add a 'signature' to your messages. A signature is like a calling card appended to the bottom of your email message. It might contain your email address, full name and phone number. To make one, go to the Tools menu in Outlook Express, choose Options and select Stationery and click on the Signature button. Type in the signature text you want to appear at the bottom of each message.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Often, you'll want to pass a file to someone as part of your email message. This is known as 'attaching' the file, and is supported by most email packages. Remember that a large file will take longer to send. Compressing it using a shareware package like WinZip on the PC will shrink it, but the receiver the file will need a copy of the same program to re-expand it – so check before you send.

ADVANCED TIP

You can set up several different email accounts. Outlook Express will check each one for new mail when you go online. This is useful if you have separate work and personal email accounts. To add extra accounts, go to the Tools menu, select Options and click on New Account. Go through the 'Getting Started' steps again below, entering the new settings.

EMAIL OPTIONS If you don't want to use Outlook Express, try these alternatives for size

EUDORA LIGHT

www.eudora.com

A very popular, free email package. Includes lots of great features. Doesn't support reading news-groups, but copes happily with 'rich content email' – mail that includes sound, images and so on.

✔ **Lots of features**
✘ **None**

HOTMAIL

www.hotmail.com

A Web-based email program. Gives you a free email address, and can be accessed from any computer with a Web browser. Can also check email from a non-Web-based account.

✔ **Accessed from any computer**
✘ **You need to be online to read or compose mail**

EUDORA PRO 4.0

www.eudora.com

Commercial bigger brother to Eudora Light. Has all the features of Lite, but also allows you to check your mail from several different accounts easily.

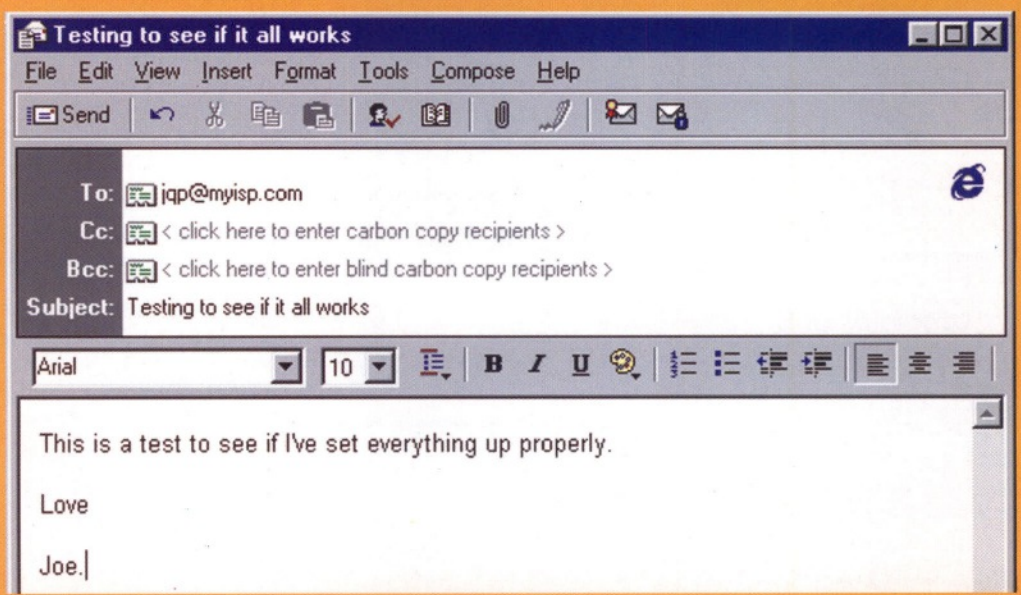
✔ **Supports multiple mailboxes, spellchacker, email filtering**
✘ **It'll set you back nearly £30**

OUTLOOK 98

www.microsoft.com Commercial bigger brother to Outlook Express. Includes an address book, to-do list and calendar, all of which link very elegantly in to the email section of the program.

✔ **Integrates well with address book, diary and scheduler**
✘ **It'll set you back around £125**

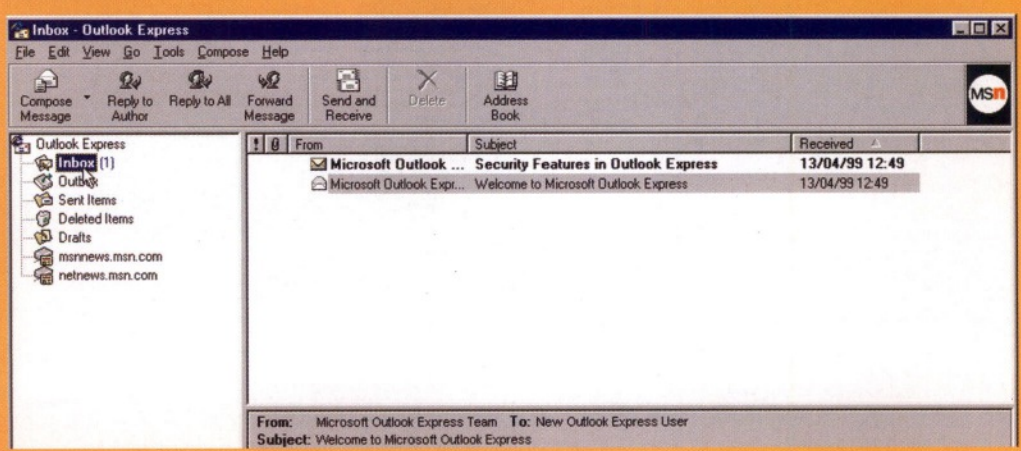
2 Composing your first email message



COMPOSING A MESSAGE

To create a message, click 'Compose Message'. If you click the small arrow just to the right, you will see that there are several pre-defined graphic message templates. But for now, just click on the button itself. Type your own email address in the 'To' field – you'll send an email to yourself to check that everything is working correctly. Enter a subject, for example 'Test Message', and in the body area just type a short message. From the File menu you can click Send to send your message now if you're online. Alternatively, if you're working offline click Send Later. This allows you to create more messages if you want, and have them ready for sending when you're ready to log on to the Net.

3 Sending, receiving & reading email



SENDING & RECEIVING MAIL

To send and receive mail, connect to the Net, then click the Send and Receive button. This will check for mail and download any new messages, at the same time sending any outgoing messages you have created. Once the program has stopped receiving mail, you can disconnect from the Net if you wish, to save phone costs. Click on In Box to the left of the screen to access the messages you have received. Click on the message to read its contents.

MORE EMAIL HELP AND ADVICE @ www.thenetmag.co.uk/helpbutton/

- ★ Sending your first message
- ★ Newsgroup etiquette
- ★ Members-only bulletin boards
- ★ Web forums

Newsgroups

Whatever your pet subject, you'll find others on the Net ready to talk about it. Here's how to link up with them

What is a newsgroup?

Newsgroups are one of the older services on the Internet. Each group is like a bulletin board – anyone can post messages to different newsgroups, and anyone can read the postings. There are tens of thousands of different newsgroup subjects available, so there will be one that matches your interests – whether you're looking for info on beekeeping or book-keeping, computers or comics, sewing or sailing.

Why should I use newsgroups?

Although the Web has plenty of information on most subjects, newsgroups will often have more detailed answers to questions. If you have a specific question on a subject, you can have half a dozen responses in two hours.

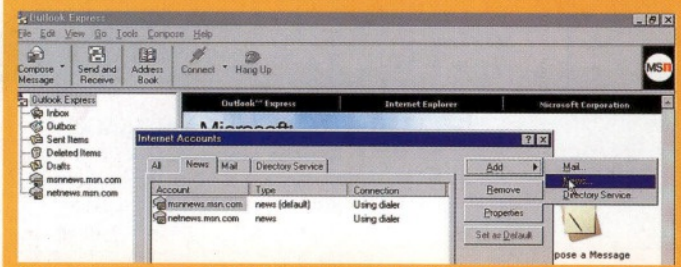
BEGINNER'S TIP

If you don't want to go to the bother of configuring Outlook Express or other newsgroup access software, visit DejaNews **www.deja.com** – a Web-based interface to newsgroups. You can read and send messages from here, all via your Web browser. Simple.

ADVANCED TIP

Your ISP will provide you with its own news server access. Mick's Place at **web.ukonline.co.uk/mick.sz/** has over 50 free access news server addresses. To add more servers to Outlook Express, go through the setting up steps outlined below.

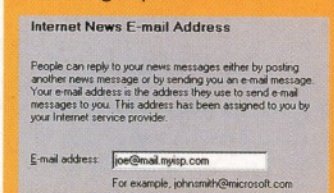
Accessing newsgroups using Outlook Express



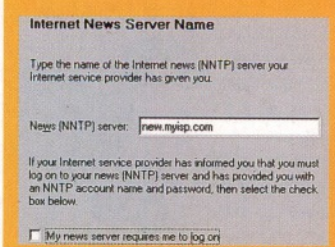
1 Go to the Accounts entry in the Tools menu, click on the News tab to list your current news accounts (if any), hit Add and choose News.

Your Name
When you post a message to a newsgroup or send an e-mail message, your display name will appear in the From field. Type your name as you would like it to appear.
Display name:
For example: John Smith

2 Type in your name. This will be displayed in any message you post to a newsgroup. Then hit Next.


Internet News E-mail Address
People can reply to your news messages either by posting another news message or by sending you an e-mail message. Your e-mail address is the address they use to send e-mail messages to you. This address has been assigned to you by your Internet service provider.
E-mail address:
joe@mail.myisp.com
For example, johnsmith@microsoft.com

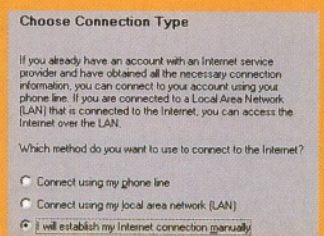
3 Type in your email address. This will be displayed in any message you post. Then click Next.


Internet News Server Name
Type the name of the Internet news (NNTP) server your Internet service provider has given you.
News (NNTP) server:
new.myisp.com
If your Internet service provider has informed you that you must log on to your news (NNTP) server and has provided you with an NNTP account name and password, then select the check box below.
My news server requires me to log on

4 Enter the name of your ISP's server which should be given in your user documentation.

Friendly Name
Information about your Internet news account is grouped together and labeled with a friendly name. This can be any name you want.
Choose a friendly name for this news account.
Internet news account name:
News from my ISP's news server

5 Give the news server a name that makes sense to you.


Choose Connection Type
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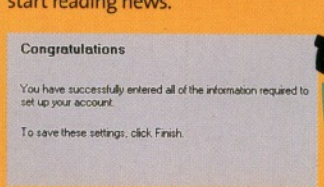
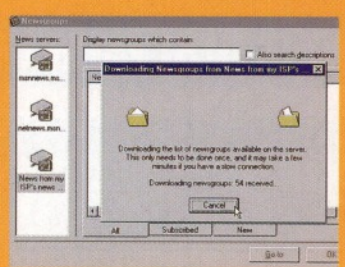
Which method do you want to use to connect to the Internet?
Connect using my phone line
Connect using my local area network (LAN)
I will establish my Internet connection manually

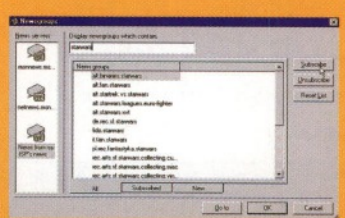
6 Tell Outlook Express that you will dial your ISP manually before you start reading news.


Congratulations
You have successfully entered all of the information required to set up your account.
To save these settings, click Finish.

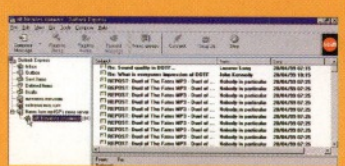
7 And you're done! You have now set up a newsgroup access account. Now let's see how to use it.



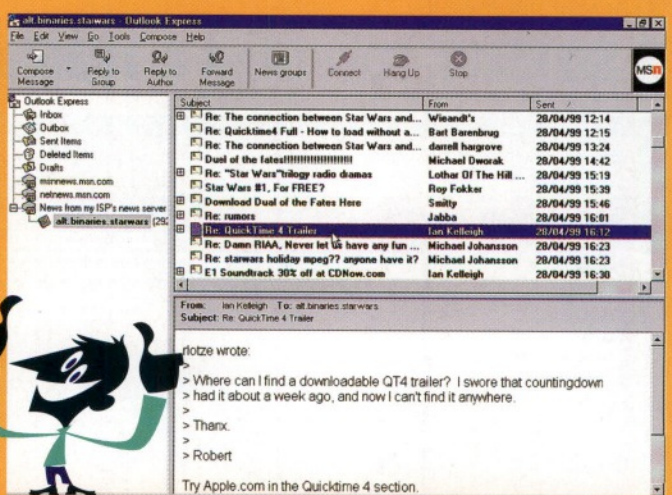
8 After hitting Close, you're asked if you want to download your ISP's list of newsgroups. When you click Yes, the list will be downloaded – so make sure you're online. This can take up to 10 minutes when you first connect to your news server because you are downloading the names of thousands of newsgroups.



9 Once all the newsgroups are downloaded, you can explore. If you want to find *Star Wars* postings, for example, type 'starwars' into the text field at the top of the window to display all newsgroups containing that word. You can subscribe to as many groups as you want.



10 To access a message inside a newsgroup, click on the subject header to read a summary. Double click the header and the whole message downloads, appearing on the lower half of the screen.


alt.binaries.starwars - Outlook Express
File Edit View Go Tools Compose Help
Compose Message
Reply to Group
Reply to Author
Forward Message
News groups
Connect
Hang Up
Stop
Outlook Express
Inbox
Outbox
Sent Items
Deleted Items
Drafts
mnnews.mn.com
netnews.mn.com
News from my ISP's news server
alt.binaries.starwars (29)
Subject
From
Sent
Re: The connection between Star Wars and... Wieandt's 28/04/99 12:14
Re: Quicktime4 Full - How to load without a... Bart Barenbrug 28/04/99 12:15
Re: The connection between Star Wars and... darrell hargrove 28/04/99 13:24
Duel of the fates!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Michael Dworak 28/04/99 14:42
Re: "Star Wars"trilogy radio dramas Lothar Of The Hill ... 28/04/99 15:19
Star Wars #1, For FREE? Roy Fokker 28/04/99 15:39
Download Dual of the Fates Here Smitty 28/04/99 15:46
Re: rumors Jabba 28/04/99 16:01
Re: QuickTime 4 Trailer Ian Kelleigh 28/04/99 16:12
Re: Damn RIAA, Never let us have any fun ... Michael Johansson 28/04/99 16:23
Re: starwars holiday mpeg?? anyone have it? Michael Johansson 28/04/99 16:23
E1 Soundtrack 30% off at CDNow.com Ian Kelleigh 28/04/99 16:30
From: Ian Kelleigh To: alt.binaries.starwars
Subject: Re: QuickTime 4 Trailer
rlotze wrote:
> Where can I find a downloadable QT4 trailer? I swore that countingdown
> had it about a week ago, and now I can't find it anywhere.
> Thanx.
> Robert
Try Apple.com in the Quicktime 4 section.

11 If there is a '+' sign by the message header this means there are replies to this message which you can also read. Click on the '+' sign to list the replies.

8 reasons to choose ContactBox for your FREE Internet access

1 FASTEST connections
Contact Box is committed to ensuring that you have reliable and fast connections every time - test the performance of Contact Box.

2 UNBEATABLE Package
- 25Mb of FREE Web space
- FREE templates to help you design your web space
- Unlimited e.mail accounts
- Comprehensive online support

3 FREE Voice to e.mail and Integrated Voice Mail
You no longer need an answering machine. Retrieve messages by phone or forward them to your e.mail. And you can customise your greeting.

4 FREE Fax to e.mail & Integrated Fax Mail
You can retrieve fax messages by phone, or have them forwarded to your e.mail. This saves you having a fax and means you have a FREE fax/answering machine facility.

5 FREE Personal Number
You receive a FREE number worth up to £225 in the first year.

6 FREE 'follow you' facility
Set up your Contact Box to send calls to 'follow you' or divert them to your e.mail. All this is controlled from an easy to use Web interface.

7 LATEST services and special offers
Contact Box customers will have access to the latest services and special offers.

8 SAVE time & money
The Contact Box site also offers you links to search engines, directories, shopping and information sources.

Visit our site today and try a 'test drive'
-http://www.contactbox.co.uk.

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www.contactbox.co.uk

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What is the internet?
How can it benefit me?
Where are the best sites?
How can I get connected?

See the pieces fall into place

For a clearer view of the internet,

get switchedon

at Olympia, London on 26-28 November 1999 and unravel the world wide web.

Sponsored by Independent Newspapers and organised by Independent Magazines (UK) Ltd
7-9 Rathbone Street, London W1P 1AF Tel: 0171 636 6651 Fax: 0171 872 0804 E Mail switchedon@indmags.co.uk

Phone the Ticket Hotline 0870 0104094
or see our website http://www.switched-on.org

Online chat

Go on, have a gas with some like-minded people. The Net is full of places to chat. Here's how to have an online natter

What is online chat?

Online chat lets you communicate with others – often in real time. In other words, you type in comments, send them over the Net and they're seen almost immediately. And you're only paying for a local phone call – even if the person you are 'talking' to happens to be on the other side of the world.

What does it let me do?

- 'Chat' with friends and relatives in other countries without running up massive phone bills.
- Join in an online discussion with an expert on your favourite subject.
- Ask a celebrity questions during a moderated 'conference'.
- Talk randomly to people on the other side of the world.

DON'T PULL THAT FACE ROUND HERE

'Smileys' are a way of including some indication of emotion in your messages. They are useful when, for example, you are making a joke and you want to be sure that the person at the other end of the line realises you're not serious. Hang a relevant smiley on the end of your sentence by typing in the relevant characters – but do try not to over-use these things. To 'read' them, just turn the page 90 degrees to the left ;-) OK? Here are the four most used smileys:

- :-) The original smiley. Indicates a joke, or just a happy person!
- ;-) Wink
- :-o Shock (an open mouth)
- :-(Unhappy

BEGINNER'S TIP

Don't register your details unless you really want to

Often chat software will ask you for your name, and sometimes other info. Be wary about giving this; you don't know what they'll be used for.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Be careful out there

If you are looking for romance online, be careful. As you would with press ads, let someone know where you're going if you meet up.

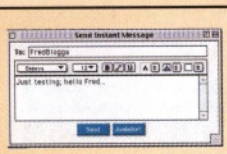
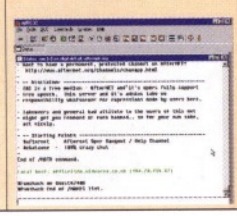
ADVANCED TIP

Go one step further

If text chat seems a bit flat, try 3D chat, where users take on a 'persona' and actually walk round chat rooms. Try ***www.thepalace.com*** for starters.

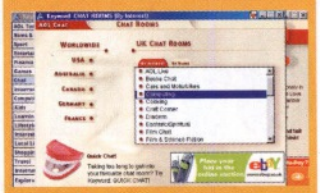
What kinds of Internet chat can I try?

There are several programs and methods for chatting online. It can get a bit confusing, so let's look at the main options

TYPE OF CHAT		FOR & AGAINST	CHAT LINK
LIVE ON A WEB SITE This kind of chat takes place within the window of your browser on a Web site. Everything you type in can immediately be seen by the other people viewing the Web page – and everything anyone else types in can be seen by you.		**FOR** Easy to use; no extra software required to run it. **AGAINST** Works on someone's Web site, so the subject will be dictated by them and private chat is unlikely.	***chat.www.talkcity.com*** Online community where you can talk on various subjects, including romance and current affairs.
MODERATED SESSIONS Moderated chats are 'supervised' by a chat room host. In other words, you type in your message and a person sitting at the other end of the line decides whether or not to allow your comments or questions to be displayed. This is the norm for celebrity chats.		**FOR** Discussions are sensibly run. Plonkers may be screened out. **AGAINST** Only take place at certain times because they require a moderator to be present on the site. Censorship...	***chat.beeb.com*** The BBC's celebrity chat service with daily visits from the network's top stars.
REAL-TIME USING EXTRA SOFTWARE Software such as AOL's Instant Messenger and ICQ allow you to chat with other people in real time – either a group of people together, or one-on-one. You don't use a Web browser; dedicated software takes care of everything for you.		**FOR** Instant response; you can chat privately to one person. **AGAINST** Requires extra software; some firms don't allow this to be installed on their PCs, so you may not be able to chat at work.	***www.aol.co.uk/aim*** ***www.icq.com*** Chat one-to-one with your friends in real time on the Net. AOL's Instant Messenger and ICQ software are two of the most popular.
IRC This is Internet Relay Chat. It's a way of talking to many people at once using special software. IRC software can be a pain to use, however – it was, after all, modelled on Citizens' Band radio.		**FOR** Useful, technical chats are often held on IRC channels. **AGAINST** Software is difficult to use; IRC users can be impatient with newcomers.	***www.mirc.com*** Although it can be tricky to get used to, mIRC is the best software for IRC chat.

CHAT ROOMS

Want to have a natter about some of the subjects you've read about in *the net* this month? Try these

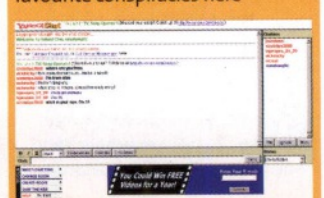


www.aol.co.uk
There are chat rooms for various subjects if you sign up to AOL

www2.imusic.com
You'll find likeminded people here whether you're into reggae or rock

come.to/theblairwitchproject
The place to go if you get freaked out by the Blair Witch Project

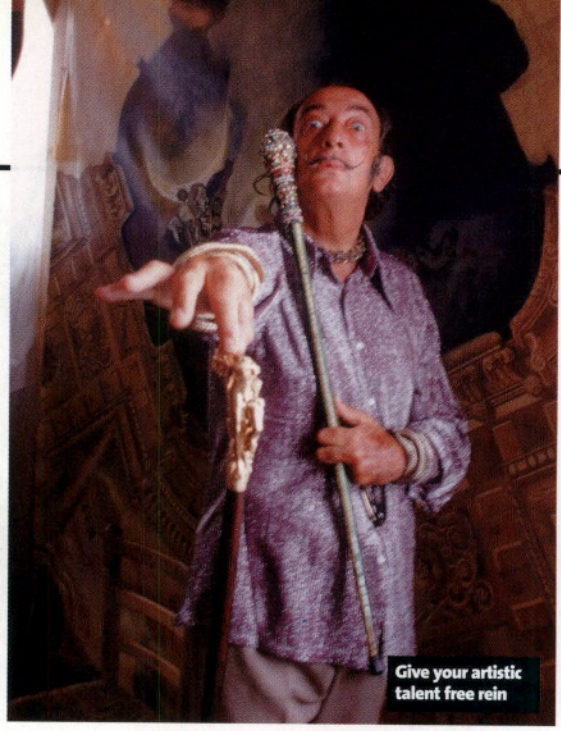
www.conspiracy-net.com/chat.html
Feeling paranoid? Discuss your favourite conspiracies here



chat.yahoo.com
You can catch up with the latest soap opera gossip on Yahoo!

ms.simplenet.com/spicegirls/
If you really really want to talk about the Spice Girls and their wonderful music, go here

Create your own Web master page


Give your artistic talent free rein

You might not believe this, but you're just moments from creating a pretty fine Web site of your own...

Talk to Web pros about building sites and straight away they'll waffle on about writing HTML (the coding language of the Web) by hand as if creating Web pages was part art, part oriental philosophy. Mention a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor – a program that automatically generates HTML code to describe what you've drawn on screen – and the pros will look at you as if you've just broken wind.

True, a good Web pro will be able to produce more elegant results. But for us mere mortals with lives to lead, any tool that can save our sketches as Web-friendly HTML means the difference between having a site and talking about it.

One of the easiest (and cheapest) ways of building your first page is to use the free tools available from Web portals or ISPs.For example, go to ***www.lycos.co.uk*** and you'll find clickable text inviting you to build your own page. Clicking on that takes you to Tripod, a free online community, where you'll be offered 12Mb of Web space. Easy.

DO-IT-YOURSELF

Creating a simple home page with these tools is as difficult as making potato prints, and a lot less messy. And with the great ISP war leaving everyone rushing to offer free access, Web space and tools, the chances are that you already have everything you need to create a site in about half an hour. If you don't, maybe it's time to change your ISP.

Almost all ISPs offer a limited amount of Web space free for personal use. It may be as little as 2Mb – smaller than a *Phantom Menace* trailer, true, but enough for your first foray into homebuilding on the frontier of the wild Web.

USE THE RIGHT TOOLS

Find the online help system for your service (which is generally cheaper than phoning), and look up 'home page' – it's likely that you'll find a simple tool for you to download to create your own site. CompuServe's is called InfoStreet and on AOL it's Personal Publisher, but just about every major ISP has one.

Failing that, you can find plenty on the Net (see panel). These tools work like wizards – they guide you through the creation of a single page step-by-step as you select your text and images (clip-art libraries are available for the 'here's one I made earlier' brigade), before finally 'publishing' your creation on the Web when you click the button that uploads it to the host server.

When you want to expand your site, free tools – and dozens of shareware ones – allow you to create more than one page and have simple hyperlinks to jump between them.

Below, you'll see just how easy it all is. We've used ZyWeb tools as a typical example – these can be found at www.zyweb.com.

The pros are right, of course, in that WYSIWYG editors can lead to 'me-too' lookalikes where everyone is using the same defaults. More disturbing to the pros, however, is the danger that people will realise that building your own site can be as easy as using a word processor.

Nine simple steps to building your own place on the Web

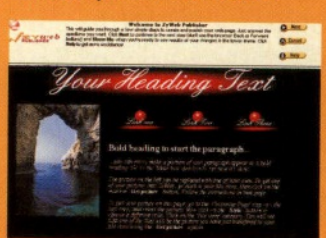
1 Choose the ZyWeb Home service (our example here) and click on the 'join' button.

2 Fill in the registration form, including a name for your site and a password to access it.

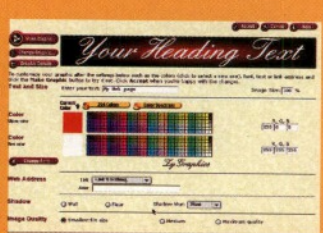
3 From the welcome page, start creating your page by clicking the File Store button on the left.

4 To create a your brand-new page, all you have to do is click New in the top left-hand corner.

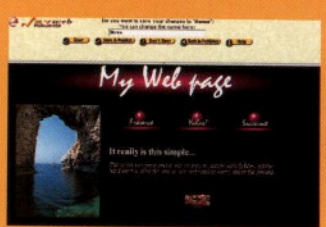
5 There is a large choice of basic formats, and you can easily modify each of them to have different backgrounds, text styles and layout.



6 Having chosen a basic layout, you can now start inputting your own text. Click the Next button in the top right corner.



7 Use the Edit button to change the style of the main heading. Keep following the instructions to complete the first 10 steps in designing your page. Use the Show Me button for a page preview.



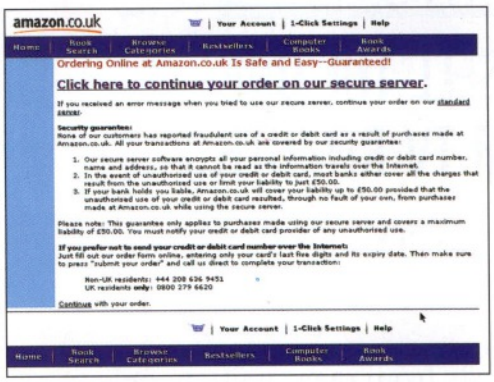
8 When you've been through the basic steps, save your work. If you are happy with what you've got you can post the page on to the Web there and then by selecting Save & Publish.

Getting more sophisticated

While the aforementioned simple tools can provide your first taste of DIY Web design and are fine for impressing friends and family, they're very limited if your site is intended for the eyes of people you don't yet know and hope to impress. It's not just the limited amount of space, it's also a question of being able to find those pages among the thousands of others in the vast expanse that is free ISP host space.

The first step towards singling your site out is to take the plunge: approach your ISP, pick a domain name and register it. Now you'll have a site name, as many Mb as you can afford, and a negotiated bandwidth limit (if you use free home pages and your visitors exceed a certain number, the ISP may pull your site).

Those seeking wisdom, or your club/hobby/celebrity stalker activities, are now much more likely to be able to find you. Obviously you don't want to let them down when they do – which means it's time to invest in a professional editor such as Fusion, DreamWeaver, FrontPage or Adobe GoLive. Such professional tools include good management of the elements of a site, including automatic checking of the links both within it and to external sites. Browser compatibility also becomes an issue when you don't know who your visitors are, and features such as the ability to target older browsers help you to ensure compatibility.


amazon.co.uk
Ordering Online at Amazon.co.uk Is Safe and Easy--Guaranteed!
Click here to continue your order on our secure server.

Making money

The principal design packages are all you need to set up a site, but if you want to include a transaction facility there are other things to consider.

You'll need to ensure security, which means, in most cases, implementing secure browser sessions by means of SSL (Secure Socket Layer). You'll need transactional software to handle orders, and while it is possible to take credit card details via SSL and run them through a separate PDQ machine to validate them, it's better to have a live validating link that checks card limits in real time.

Sound a bit heavy? Well, it is – so you'd be wise to look at the hosting options available. Most larger ISPs will help you set up e-commerce. Since you may need flexible bandwidth – to cope with surges after an advert or promotion – you'd be wise to pick one that can just 'turn on the tap' and give you more when you need it. If you're confident of your likely traffic, can afford the server space, and are determined to do it yourself, invest in an 'e-commerce in a box' package such as Click and Build, which presents the whole process of making an e-shop as a step-by-step guide. Coming, as it does, from online payment specialists WorldPay, it can even build a full credit card validation system.

My Web page
Freeserve
Yahoo!
Soccernet
It really is this simple...
This is my web page and it was so easy to design with ZyWeb. All the hard wo
done for you so you just need to worry about the content.
Made By ZyWeb
make cool web graphics
FREE with
ZyGraphics
ANY
Made by... ZyWeb

9 **If you've published the site, why not pay it a visit? Bear in mind that you can go into the File Store as often as you like to change what you've put up – so it's simple to add new features, pictures or additional pages.**

Key considerations

Those first faltering steps to Net stardom

Plan your site

Obvious, really – but a lot of people still make it up as they go along, and that doubles development time. Feel free to cheat as part of your planning: surf for success – look at other sites and nick all their ideas.

Assemble the elements of the site

Text, graphics, clip art, even streaming video if you want to get fancy. But whatever you want on your site, collect all the elements together and organise them in folders, so you won't be struggling to find that little icon you spent half a day painting.

Build it all locally

Create a mock Internet in a dedicated directory on your hard drive, and 'host' your entire site on it. Then test it by clicking on every link and every button until you're quite sure it all works. Then do it all again, only this time accessing it through the other main browser versions that your punters may be using.

Publish your project

Go live either by hitting the 'go live' button on your free pages, or talking to an ISP about hosting services.

That's not the end of the affair, however...

Publicise the darned thing

There's no point to all your hard work if all the site does is lie there visitorless like a cyber-Johnny No-Mates. Promotion can be as simple as exchanging links with similar sites and posting the URL to a newsgroup or two, or as ambitious as launching a national TV campaign – it's up to you to decide.

TO BUY OR SELL A CAR JUST CLICK HERE!

WHAT CAR? TEXT ✔ **SKYTEXT PAGE 502**

WHAT CAR? ONLINE ✔ **www.whatcar.co.uk**

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Britain's best car buying and selling service is now live on Sky TV and the internet.

So you're just a few clicks away from:

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- Getting your used car accurately valued in seconds.
- Finding the best used cars for sale nearest to your home, from 1000s on offer
- Offering your car for sale to millions of potential buyers
- Getting the latest car reviews and news

To reach What Car? Text,
just go to page 502 on Skytext.

To log onto What Car? Online, go to
www.whatcar.co.uk on the world wide web.

WHAT CAR?

BRITAIN'S BEST CAR BUYERS' GUIDE IS NOW LIVE!

Community spirited

Not talking to your neighbours? Then why has Britain gone Net-community mad?

What's the difference between the type of trainspotter who checks out the occasional magazine and the type who joins the national association and runs for branch secretary? Bo Peabody, 28, knows the difference, and it has nothing to do with their rankings on the get-a-life chart. Nope, the main distinction between the two is a sense of belonging and community, and it exists as much on the Web as it does in the real world – which is why networked community sites are some of the fastest growing entities on the Web today.

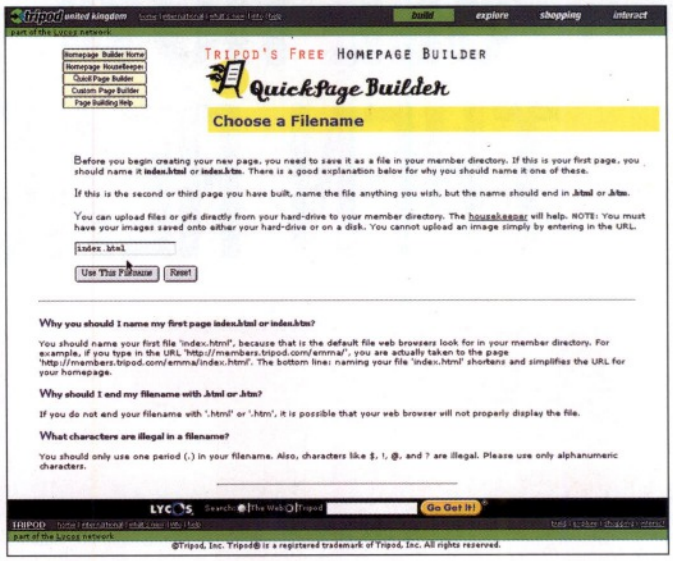
Peabody's company, Tripod (***www.tripod.com***), is at the forefront of online community-building, along with rivals GeoCities (***www.geocities.com***) and Fortune City (***www.fortunecity.com***). Between them these three have more than 10 million registered users.

In Tripod's online world, 'neighbours', or members, are called

Tripod UK is the only site to have a pod for clubbing

Tripodians and what brings them to their locale on the Web is the lure of free Web space and email. It is also relatively easy to get your home page up and running and members are provided with a nice, cheap service. Member pages are grouped into virtual meeting places ('pods' at Tripod) so if you want to find like-minded individuals who share your zeal for football – and you want them to find you – it's easily done.

Currently, a thousand new users are joining Tripod every day. With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build explore shopping interact
TRIPOD'S FREE HOMEPAGE BUILDER
QuickPage Builder
Choose a Filename
Before you begin creating your new page, you need to save it as a file in your member directory. If this is your first page, you should name it index.html or index.htm. There is a good explanation below for why you should name it one of these.
If this is the second or third page you have built, name the file anything you wish, but the name should end in .html or .htm.
You can upload files or gifs directly from your hard-drive to your member directory. The housekeeper will help. NOTE: You must have your images saved onto either your hard-drive or on a disk. You cannot upload an image simply by entering in the URL.
index.html
Use This Filename
Reset
Why you should I name my first page index.html or index.htm?
You should name your first file 'index.html', because that is the default file web browsers look for in your member directory. For example, if you type in the URL 'http://members.tripod.com/emma/', you are actually taken to the page 'http://members.tripod.com/emma/index.html'. The bottom line: naming your file 'index.html' shortens and simplifies the URL for your homepage.
Why should I end my filename with .html or .htm?
If you do not end your filename with '.html' or '.htm', it is possible that your web browser will not properly display the file.
What characters are illegal in a filename?
You should only use one period (.) in your filename. Also, characters like $, !, @, and ? are illegal. Please use only alphanumeric characters.
LYCOS
Go Get It!
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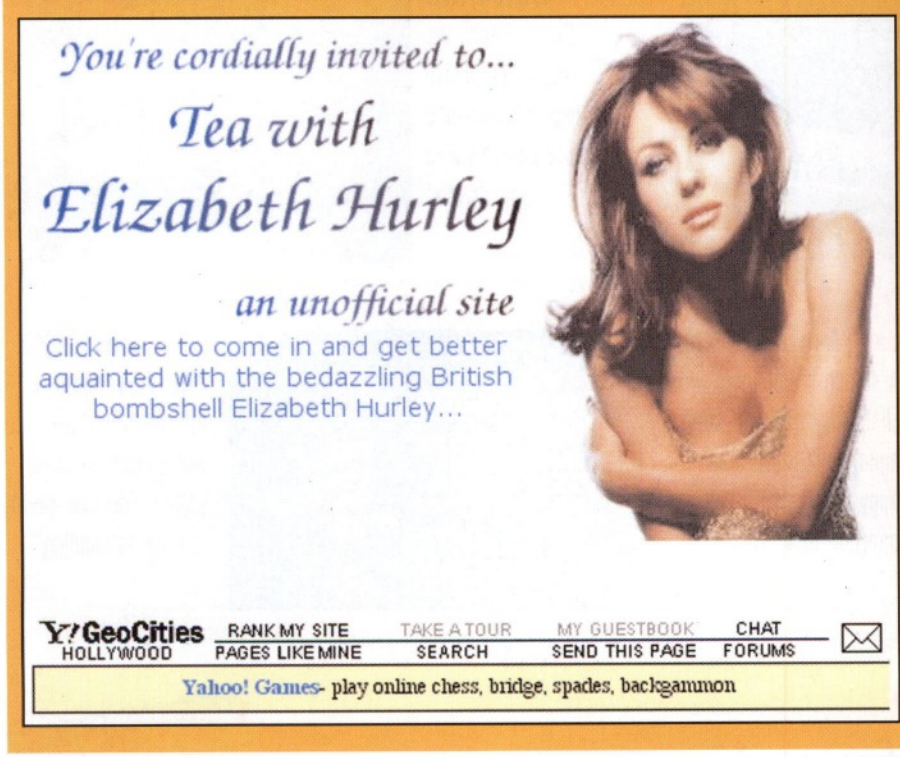
such a growth rate and the traffic it generates it's hardly surprising that the powers that be sat up and took notice: 18 months ago Tripod was bought by Lycos, one of the world's leading search engine and portal operations, for $58 million.

Now the three big communities (all, unsurprisingly, US-based) are making swift inroads into Europe. Fortune City launched a UK-specific zone (***www.fortunecity.co.uk***) in March, while Tripod's UK and Ireland site (***www.tripod.co.uk***) has been live since last November. An important point is that, by their very nature, the networked communities tend to localise quickly. 'Because users create the content, it immediately reflects the culture,' says Peabody, who stayed on as Tripod president after the Lycos deal. Thus group topics may well vary between countries: Tripod UK, for instance, is the only site to have a pod for clubbing.

As the communities mature, users should benefit from even more interaction. In the next month, Tripod UK is to launch the new version of its home page software, which will mean that even complete novices can build respectable sites in minutes. Also on offer from all three will be more 'transaction-enabling' functions (that means selling stuff, to you and me), giving users the wherewithal to sell goods from personal sites – with a healthy percentage of revenue going back to the community host, of course.

Here's the sort of thing you can knock together on a community Web site



LIZ HURLEY

One devotee's starry-eyed tribute page to the hard-to-escape-from Hurley is to be unearthed at ***www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Bungalow/1541/index.html***. Who do you love? If you want to share your reverence or infatuation with the surfing masses, it's not hard to design something similar

FRANK SINATRA

The late, great guy with the golden tonsils gets a dose of Web-based worship via Geocities, too: the Sinatra Tribute site's at ***www.geocities.com/Pipeline/2325/index.html***

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"Quite simply, the most impressive high-performance luxury saloon we've ever driven"

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New Rover 75
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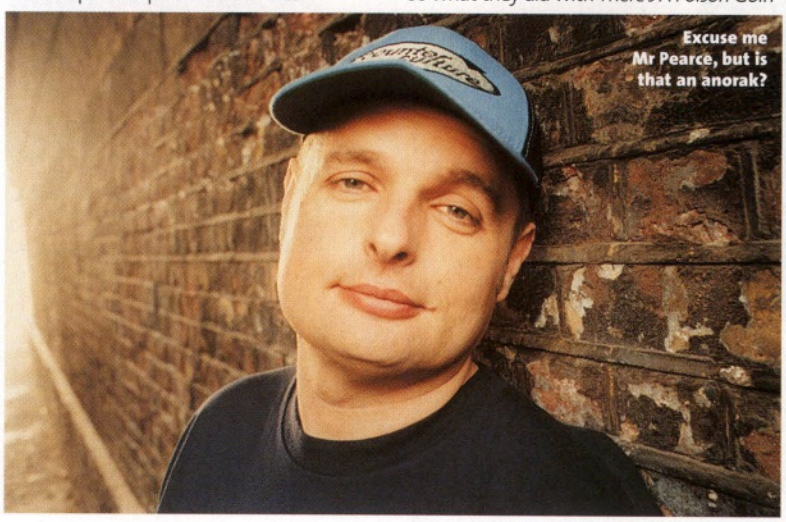
or email enquiries@thebrickhouse.co.uk

DAVE PEARCE

MP3 is fine by Radio 1 DJ Dave Pearce – to a point, that is, and he still loves to feel that vinyl on his skin

Does the Internet help you find new dance music?
It can and the possibilities it offers are increasing almost every day. Because it's one of the 'fastest' mediums around it is undoubtedly one of the best ways to get up-to-date information about new releases or public opinion about certain tracks. Regarding new and groundbreaking music, the Internet is unique in offering the opportunity for anyone in the world to listen to the music you've created. More and more of the sites are offering samples or downloads, but it's still some way from being perfect. As a DJ, though, I'm still a vinyl junkie – you can't beat that hands-on feel of rifling through record racks!

How long have you been online?
About three years, but it's only really within the past 18 months that I've fully realised the power of the Net. It dramatically reduces the 'size' of the world and I've no doubt it will go on playing a more and more important part in all our lives.


Excuse me Mr Pearce, but is that an anorak?

Are you involved in the content of your own Web site?
It's run by a couple of friends of mine but I am involved with regular input to the site. If I've got a new album coming out or details of new gigs then it's one of the first places the information will go. I think it's important to have an online presence and give the listeners and clubbers the opportunity to contact you and interact.

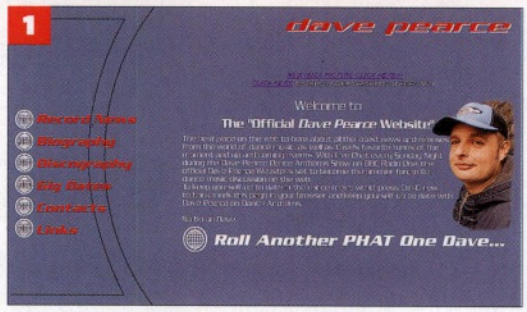
Have you considered putting dance music on the site, such as tunes from your album?
We haven't put any of the tracks from the previous albums on the site but it's something we're looking to do with the new one. Because many of the tracks need to be as upfront as possible we don't confirm the track listing until as late as possible in the production of the album. Some singles don't get released until up to two months after the album comes out, so this can cause problems in getting clearance to put them on the site. It's an issue we hope to have addressed by the time the new *Dave Pearce Presents...* album is released.

The Internet has thousands of radio stations – do you listen to many of them?
To be honest, I don't really have the time. I spend almost all of the weekend travelling to gigs around the UK and Europe, plus a couple of gigs midweek. I don't get that many opportunities to sit in front of the PC and plough through the stations. If I could get them in the car or on my Walkman then I'd definitely give them a go – it's good to hear stations that you wouldn't get a chance to listen to otherwise.

You were the man who brought Public Enemy to the nation. What do you think of their activities on the Net?
The group has always courted controversy, so what they did with *There's A Poison Goin' On* came as no surprise to me. In some ways I think it was a positive and bold move – it's good to see a band taking control and saying: 'we made the music and we're going to do things our way'. But, also, all the major record companies are worried about the whole MP3 scenario, and I can also see their point of view. It could easily get out of control and if people start getting the music they want for little or no money at all, it could mean less money in the music industry and could spark a rapid downward spiral. After all, if artists end up not getting paid for the music they make, who's going to make the new music?

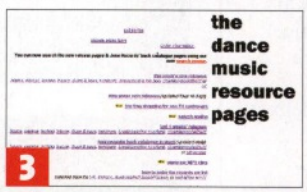
Dave Pearce can be heard on Radio 1, Monday-Thursday, 6-8pm

DAVE'S 'DANGEROUS' WEB SITES



1 DAVE PEARCE
www.davepearce.co.uk
Bit of an obvious choice this one. The gig details, contact details and background info is all there – but I've no idea how some of the gallery pictures managed to get on there!

2 DANCE ANTHEMS CHAT ROOMS
www.radio1.org
Not an official Radio 1 site as the name may suggest, instead this is run by 18-year-old Robin Brinkler. It's very popular and we always keep one eye on it during the broadcast. It's good to know what people are saying about the show as it's going out on air.



3 DANCE MUSIC RESOURCE PAGES
www.juno.co.uk
A mass of information – kind of like a specialised dance music search engine that does all the hard work for you. It contains information on all current and up and coming releases, plus links to over 500 worldwide dance music sites.

4 MUSIC SEARCH
www.musicsearch.com
If we've got a band on the show, then the fan sites are way ahead of the official sites or the record company for up-to-the-minute news and gossip.

5 EXPEDIA UK
www.expedia.co.uk
As well as spending so much of my time travelling for work purposes, I also love to get away from it all with a relaxing holiday abroad. Earlier this year I booked a multi-site holiday in the Far East completely through the Net.

ADVERTISEMENT

...and here it is.

If your idea of in-car entertainment is a suspiciously soggy 49-card pack of playing cards and a crackly old three-waveband radio with a broken on-off switch, it's time to wake up and smell the digital roses. Infotainment may be a funny word, but the in-car multimedia systems that produce it are serious pieces of kit. We're talking revolution here. And now. Right now, in fact, if the kit bears the VDO Dayton logo.

VDO Dayton is the result of Philips Car Systems' 1997 takeover by Mannesmann, Europe's leading private operator of mobile and fixed telecomms networks. VDO Dayton's first big achievement: bringing state-of-the-art navigation, communications and entertainment into your car.

All at once. And now.

Captain Ahab would have given his right leg for any of this gear. It looks utterly fab and works superbly. A TMC-enabled Dynamic Navigation function and upcoming GSM module* will dump the full wonder of real-time route guidance and telematics into your grateful lap. But the best part? Ease of use. VDO Dayton does all the thinking, so you don't have to.

* available early 2000

VDO DAYTON MS 6000 ▶
Awesomely-specced range topper is the David Beckham of car navigation. Standard DIN slot, ooze-up screen's auto-scrolling map can be mixed with pictographs in split screen mode, or presented across the full 6.5in landscape. Mates to 6-disc CD changer, boots out 45 fat watts. DSP tuner, hands-free calls with emergency function, speed warning system, and an optional TV tuner. Sadly, doesn't make the tea - but then, neither does a McLaren F1. Or Beckham.

VDO Dayton. The Car Brand.

VDO DAYTON MS 5000 ▶
World's first one-chip navigator system, with a hi-res 5.8in widescreen display that's just as fast and simple to operate as every other VDO Dayton navisys. Like pulling sudden U-turns? Not really recommended near the Arc de Triomphe, but greatly facilitated by the fitment of MS 5000's optional rear view camera. Zut alors.

◀ VDO DAYTON MS 4000
This pictogram-display unit is sharper than a Mugler suit. DSP tuner equals zero interference, optional VDO Dayton DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) receiver means absurdly rapid signal reception. 'Enjoy' a telcon with your mother-in-law in full 4 x 45 watt audio, hmm, or better still, let the MS4000's softly spoken instructions soothe you on your way.

VDO DAYTON MS 3000 ▶
The first standalone in-car navigation system, and a perfect add-on to an existing in-car audio system. Optional MT 5000 Dynamic Navigation Receiver will analyse traffic bulletin information to lead you onto the least bunged-up routes. Luxury.

VDO Dayton. The Car Brand.

▲▲ CD/CR 2100
Entry-level unit is 4x35 watts RDS tuner with CD or cassette, five Digital Sound Processor customisable sound presets, detachable front panel, telephone mute and optional remote

▲ CD/CR 2200
Step up a gear: five DSP presets plus Auto Leveller, speed-dependent volume control, telephone-in (audio), speed warning system, temperature display and 2-channel pre-amp out

The speed of sound is more than just a concept. In car audio terms, it's a target. Because fast sound is pure sound. Digital sound is fast sound. VDO Dayton digital sound is very fast. It's very pure.

And here's the bonus feature: it sounds amazing.

Eh? Isn't that normal then? Inside a car, sadly not. Some ICE manufacturers consider full-colour front panel recreations of the Blackpool Illuminations to be at least as important as sonic fidelity. Which is a bit weird, as we Brits are well known for our pernickety ears. Watt for watt, the UK home audio industry is arguably the best in the world.

So, why do we accept less in our cars?

Good question. VDO Dayton's answer is to bring European, home quality sound into the mobile environment. And the VDO Dayton solution is based on function rather than flash. All the features are there: there's even the odd light to look at. But it's mainly aimed at your ears.

Take the Auto Equaliser. At the start of a journey it analyses a car's acoustics and calibrates the audio output to fit. Perfectly. Radio transmissions or CDs come out exactly 'right'. No more pesky volume adjustments needed, either: all VDO Dayton units automatically compensate for speed-related increases in engine and road noise. And you can programme in a speed warning to go off at a predetermined mark.

With outputs ranging from 4 x 35 watts to 1 x 460 watts, there's enough power to cover you up to obscenely high speeds. Not quite the speed of sound, perhaps. But enough to put the wind up the opposition.

▲ 3300 All VDO Dayton units feature ultra-fast search capability, outstanding selectivity, minimal interference and outstanding clarity. But this one is a real beast. Telephone-in function stomps normal hands-free quality. Speed warning system, auto acoustic equaliser and volume leveller, temperature warning option, major league display, 4x45 watts, softkey operation, frequency analyser - suddenly, the term 'car radio' seems pitifully inadequate.

▲ CH 0600 & 1000 CD CHANGERS ► QB 1000 & 1200 SUBWOOFERS
Cut track-skip out of your life with these high-end 6- or 10-disc CD changers. Then hook your 3300 to a QB subwoofer: pure aluminium diaphragm ensures an entirely desirable combination of light weight, max rigidity and min distortion. RMS power handling 120 or 150 watts. And oh yes, the sound: heavy, tight and dry as a camel's hoof.

VDO Dayton. The Car Brand.

◀ CR/CD 3100/3200 RADIO-CASSETTE/CD
Silver finish 4x45 watt 3200 and 4x40 watt 3100 both sport DSP, temp display, speed warning system and softkeys, which can be assigned different functions according to the audio source. Preferably not tomato. 3200 has audio telephone-in function too.

CH 0400 CD CHANGER ▶
Elegant magazine system 4-disc CD changer installs in second DIN slot, glovebox, or under (not on) seat. Shares cunning CH 0600 and 1000 chassis suspension design to rule out that annoying skipping while negotiating sleepiing policemen. Which is nice.

PA 4600, 4400, 2460 AMPS ▶
Bridgeable 4-, 3- and 2-channel amps: 4x150, 4x100 or 2x230 watts, and loads of sonic juice. Variable high- and low-pass filters, variable input sensitivity, cooling fan - and bank-vault build to match the performance.

◀ MS 4000 (AGAIN)
And why not? Saucy panel-down shot shows how VDO Dayton gear is engineered for life. Navigation CDs cover most of Euro road network, usually down to house numbers. Places of interest are often illustrated, with price and rating information.

◄ QM 6930 TRIAXIAL
6x9 triaxial speaker handles 60 watts RMS, 200 peak. 6-speaker range includes 90/300 watt 200mm 2030.

MS 3000 ►
Standalone navsys grafts seamlessly onto existing audio. Display is head-up or dash-mount, remote is illuminated infra-red.

Electronic Storm

Martin Thoone, Executive Vice President of VDO Dayton's Technology Division, offers a glimpse into a dazzling in-car future

For navigation and communication there is now a perfect match between user needs and available technology at the right price. That's why VDO Dayton's technology guru **Martin Thoone** is sure we're on the brink of a revolution.

'Any application must have functionality,' says Thoone. 'It must offer real benefits, the technology must be mature and it must fulfil a need. So far, entertainment has been dominant in the car. Now we have navigation to help us reach our destination safely, and communication to allow the navigation system to be updated with real-time traffic information. It's a much more efficient use of car time.'

What might be next? 'You could easily use a navigation system's knowledge of a road network to set up an acoustic warning when drivers are entering a curve at too high a speed. Where you're inputting destinations or asking about points of interest, voice recognition makes a lot of sense. But for the car, voice recogntion hardware has to be more rugged.

'Wireless communication is developing quickly. People in the back will soon be able to listen to music on headphones, while front seat passengers use the comms function. Very soon we will have mobile Internet access, which will mean e-mail in the car.'

And later? 'In my ideal world, cars will be a combination of office and concert hall.' If Thoone is right, for 'ideal', read 'imminent'.

For more information on VDO Dayton

Tel: **0121 344 5400** or visit us on our web site **www.vdodayton.com**

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